ROMANCES of COLONIAL DAYS

GERALDINE BROOKS

W. H. WALLACE
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ROMANCES OF COLONIAL DAYS

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PREFACE.

ONCE a poet with the gold of fact and the alloy of his own fancy fashioned a poem which he called a "Ring." In writing these "Romances of Colonial Days" I have endeavored to keep the poet's "Ring" always in mind, to make them rings of romance in which gold and alloy each has its part. Musty old records, letters, and diaries of men and women long since dead have furnished me my gold; and it is surprising how much of gold, facts still breathing the life, the love, the joys and sorrows of a bygone day, lies hidden in these dry-looking mines of history.

In many of the "Romances" the gold has very nearly shaped itself into a ring, requiring little help from the alloy of fancy; not only do the characters of these "Romances" live and love, joy and sorrow according to historic fact, they even speak according to historic fact. In other of the "Romances" there is less of gold and more of

alloy. But in all of the "Romances" some gold is visible for him who seeks to find it.

It has been my wish by blending gold and alloy, fact and fancy, to fashion rings of romance that shall make real to us, near and dear to us, the heroes and heroines of colonial romance, the atmosphere they breathed, the time in which they lived. That time, that atmosphere, those heroes and heroines are not so far removed but that we should feel their kinship; and it is with the hope that this kinship may be realized that I offer these "Romances of Colonial Days."

G. B.

Somerville, Mass., September, 1902.

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Drawings by Arthur E. Becher

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ROMANCES OF COLONIAL DAYS.

I.

IN MAYFLOWER TIME.

All day the labor of corn planting had gone on in the fields. John Alden, with the other able-bodied men of the colony, had been toilsomely, wearyingly employed at hoeing and at catching ells, at fetching corn and stowing corn and ells together in the freshly ploughed hummocks of earth, planting as Squanto the Indian had directed, after the manner of the Indians of Patuxet, original tillers of the soil. Now, at the sunset hour, he sat on the doorstep of his and the Captain's house, the house that he and the Captain themselves had builded, with walls of stout log, a roof of thatch, a chimney of sticks and clay, and windows in which oiled paper served for glass. Not yet even at the sunset hour was his day's work ended. The wash tubs of the colony were about him and he was overhauling them, examin-

ing their hoops and mending them where they needed, 'gainst the colony's next washing day; for having been cooper by trade in old England, he had not ceased to be cooper in New England, though now his coopering was but a pastime in a manifoldly busy life.

His friend and patron, Miles Standish, the Captain, sat on a bench in the doorway of their rude home smoking his pipe and quietly enjoying the view outspread before them. It was a fair view, that upon which their cabin looked; the street with the other of the seven houses of Plymouth stretching down to the beach, then the long sweep of sand with the massy headlands at either end, beyond, the bay flushed with the bright yellow light of sunset, and the green heights of Manomet lifting in the distance.

Presently John Alden raised his head from his work, tossed aside the last tub, and putting back his tousle of tawny hair from his forehead, filling his broad chest with a long, invigorating breath, and folding his hands in restful fashion behind his head, gazed off to that same view which the Captain was still quietly enjoying.

Immediately his attention was caught by a group of girls wandering along the beach, gathering seaweed as they went. The girls were approaching the headland at one end of the beach, and as they came to it several of them essayed to climb it, but all failed until one, a slight, lithe figure, with a

quick spring and scramble scaled it and stood on its summit, waving her hands with triumphant gesture to the girls below.

Just over Alden's shoulder a low laugh of approval sounded. "Well done," ejaculated the Captain. "Canst make out who she is, Johnny?"

"Mistress Priscilla Mullins, if I mistake not," answered Alden, with a positive look that belied the uncertainty of his tone. "She hath ever made it a ground for quarrel with Mistress Mary Chilton that Mary, not she, was the first to spring ashore from the 'Mayflower.' Perchance now she will be more forgiving, since she alone of all the maids hath scaled the bluff." A light had come into the young man's face as he spoke and he kept his eyes fixed steadfastly upon the slight, lithe figure silhouetted against the sky.

The other girls went on up from the shore, but Priscilla lingered behind a moment. Alden fancied he could guess her thoughts as she stood there. She was facing the harbor and he knew she must be looking at the old anchoring ground, where once a dark familiar hulk had stood. It was not many days ago that the colonists, a silent, sorrowful band of Pilgrims, lesser by half their number than those who had sailed in the "Mayflower," had gathered on the shore and watched, through a blur of tears, the ship hoist sail, glide away to the offing, and drop, a white, sunlit speck, over the horizon. And now, Alden divined, Pris-

cilla was missing the "Mayflower," that last link with the past and home, and the dear memories associated with home; the vacant anchoring ground was reminding her of all that she had lost, and she was thinking of her father and mother and brother, and the family's trusted servant, whose graves were behind her on the hillside. Alden's heart went out to her in her loneliness and desolation with a great, self-forgetting love.

He was at length recalled to himself and his surroundings by the dawning consciousness of another's gaze, and glancing up to where the Captain sat, he met the Captain's eyes fixed intently upon him. Something in those eyes, a light that was at once accusing and sympathetically understanding, made Alden look away, and as he did so, the color slowly mounting to his cheek glowed beneath its dark tan, telling tales upon his heart.

At sight of the tell-tale color the Captain left his seat, and coming down the step stood before the young man, his short, stocky, military figure opposing the other's view, peremptorily demanding entire and immediate attention.

"Johnny," he declared in a queer voice, half fierce, half tender, "this dumb show of ours has been going on long enough. 'T is time I stopped playing the master and you the page. Speak out, boy, tell me that you love the maiden."

But Alden's eyes, eyes that had ever in their clear, blue depths a faithfulness like that of a

dog's, were fixed at a range no higher than the tops of the Captain's boots, and his mouth remained shut with an unwonted stubbornness that intensified the usual firmness of its lines.

The Captain made a quick gesture of impatience. "Nay, then," he exclaimed, "if you will not speak, let your silence speak for you. I say that you love Mistress Priscilla Mullins. Canst deny it?"

It was impossible to elude the little Captain's fiery glance for long. Alden met it at last with a look of appeal and protest. "Spare me, dear friend," he cried. "I meant not to offend or anger you. 'T is my misfortune, not my fault, that I love where you love. I had hoped to hide my love from you, deeming it an insult to our friendship. But you have forced a confession of it from me. And now, what can I do to justify myself in your eyes? I am at your mercy, dear friend, dear patron."

A puzzled, self-accusing frown darkened the Captain's brow. "Am I in very truth a tyrant?" he inquired gruffly, soliloquizingly; and after a short pause, "I will be a tyrant no longer. I will not stand between you and the maiden. Go to her. Tell her you love her." He was mounting the step as he spoke and was about to enter the house and briefly, as was his fashion, to terminate the interview. From the doorway of the house he looked back affectionately, yet indignantly, at Alden. "No doubt you will be more successful

for yourself than you were for me," he added, with a touch of bitterness in his tone. "You with your Apollo locks and gospel face should find your way easily to the maiden's heart," and he turned to go into the house.

But Alden was on his feet in an instant, love for the Captain and a proud resentment of the Captain's tone kindling into a blaze his usually tranquil face. "Captain Standish," he called after the retreating figure in an authoritative voice that became him strangely and arrested the Captain on the threshold, "hear me before you leave me. Understand, I will not go to the maiden and talk to her of love. For you I have failed. For myself I will not speak." He was beside the Captain, his hand extended, his face still aglow and smiling bravely. "Now will you take my hand?" he inquired.

Touched by the young man's words and even more by his voice and manner, the Captain's indignation and bitterness left him. He was all friendliness, a friendliness that took the form of a playful severity. He put out one hand to meet Alden's and laid the other hand affectionately upon the young man's shoulder.

"Johnny, thou art an obstinate lad," he said. "If you would please me, do as I bid you. Go tell the maiden that you love her. To woo her is your right, not mine; for 't is you, not I, who love Priscilla. Your face and my own heart tell me so.

Only once in our lives is it given us to love deeply. For you that once is Priscilla. For me" — his playful severity vanished and he glanced sadly toward the hillside where was the Pilgrims' burying-ground — "for me that once was Rose." He ended in softened voice. Then after a pause, looking back into Alden's face with a return of his playful severity, he queried, "Dost understand me, boy?"

And Alden understood. As clearly as though it had been written he read the story of the Captain's second wooing. Sympathy and tenderness for Priscilla in her lonely state, not love, he plainly saw had prompted the Captain to make his suit to her. He had wondered when the Captain appointed him his envoy that a man could send another to do his wooing for him. And he had wondered, too, at the manner, one more of wounded pride than of disappointed love, in which the Captain had received the maid's refusal and had regarded him, his envoy, upon suspicion of his love for the maiden. He had wondered at all this, but now he wondered no longer. The Captain did not love, had never loved Priscilla. It was the memory of Rose he loved, of sweet, fragile Mistress Standish, dearly remembered of all who had sailed in the "Mayflower," whose grave was one of those so sadly planted on the hillside close by.

With a look of infinite sympathy and affection, and with a new gladness at his heart, Alden an-

swered the Captain: "Yes, I understand, dear friend."

Nodding his satisfaction, the Captain drew away his hand. "Well, then, sir, go," he commanded shortly; and retreating through the doorway, he called back in smiling raillery, "My compliments to the maiden and my blessing on your loves."

Alden's gaze rested a brief space gratefully, lovingly, on the doorway through which the Captain had disappeared into the house. For the moment his thought was of him, his friend, and he gave thanks that God had granted him such a friend. Then with a quick rush of feeling, the gladness that was at his heart visible in his eyes, he turned from the doorway and his thought, his one thought, was of Priscilla.

As he took his way down the street to Elder Brewster's cottage, where with the Elder and his wife and their two sons, Love and Wrestling, lived Priscilla Mullins and Mary Chilton and Elizabeth Tilley, three Puritan maidens orphaned by the cruelty of the Puritans' first winter in New England, his one thought of Priscilla, sweetly, enchantingly assertive, drove all else from his mind. And with the thought came visions of Priscilla; Priscilla laughing, teasing, gay, serious, sorrowful; Priscilla spinning; Priscilla singing psalms; Priscilla fetching water from the spring; Priscilla tending the sick and dying, and praying over the graves of the dead; Priscilla in her many moods,

amid the manifoldly sad and sober scenes of the young colony's life.

Chiefest of all these visions, brighter, more vivid than the rest, came one of Priscilla standing beside her father's chair listening in a manner part grave, part merry, while Alden, addressing himself to Mr. Mullins, presented the Captain's suit. It was in the late winter, several weeks before Mr. Mullins' death, quite some time ago, that Alden had gone on his delicate mission for the Captain. Yet, as clearly as though it were yesterday, he remembered his own tragic sinkings of heart as with downcast eyes, hesitatingly, perfunctorily, he went through his part. Priscilla had read his hesitations and perfunctory eloquence. She had guessed at his sinkings of heart. With a thrill of joy he recalled the light in her eyes half-laughing, half tender, which she had turned upon him when at length, with an uncontrollable sigh of self pity, he had ventured to raise his glance to hers. Then she had spoken, and the tone of her voice had seemed to open Paradise to him. "Why dost thou not speak for thyself, John?" she had asked him. But he had not answered, he had not entered at the door of Paradise held so invitingly open. He had averted his face and gone on his way, along the difficult path of duty, suffering, sorrowing; an ever-present vision of honor, honor in the military form of the little Captain, had kept him to his path. Now the vision had dismissed him. Once more Paradise

was revealed to him. He might knock at the door — would it open to him? He might speak for himself — would Priscilla hear him? His question became a prayer, and in the spirit of a reverential lover he approached the Elder's house.

He mounted the doorstep of the house and stood a moment on the threshold, looking in. Priscilla was not there. Yet her presence seemed to pervade the place. Her spinning-wheel in the corner, the chair in which she often sat, her prayer-book lying open on the table, other and various things associated with her spoke to the young man subtly, eloquently, in a language which the heart alone understands.

From the loft above came sounds of talk and laughter, the talk and laughter of girls, and in a moment Mary Chilton and Elizabeth Tilley appeared at the head of the stairway leading from the loft to the living-room below. At sight of Alden standing on the threshold, Elizabeth, a young, pert maiden, called out saucily, "Art looking for Priscilla, John Alden? She 's not here."

But Mary, who was older, graver, kinder than Elizabeth, came down and talked with Alden of the warm weather, of the sailing of the "Mayflower," of the coming of spring with its birds and its flowers, of the sowing of the fields. Briefly and quietly she spoke and at last, standing by the window and looking out, with careful carelessness she observed, "Priscilla is long in returning. She

should be home by now. See, the sun is past setting and the twilight is falling and fading fast. The Elder hath often told us 't is not safe for a maid to go about alone after sundown. But Priscilla laughs at all cautious. She is too fearless. If you are going by the brook road, whither she hath gone, and should see her, John Alden, will you not send her home? She shall be scolded by me, her little mother, as she calls me, for being a most rash and reckless maid."

"I will find the truant, little mother, and bring her home to you," John Alden answered, and his eyes thanked Mary Chilton for her kind heart and gentle manner.

Leaving the Elder's cottage and going down the hill to the brookside, John Alden found himself repeating, more appreciatively, more fervently than ever before, the joyous words from the beautiful old Song of Songs:

> "Lo, the winter is past,
> The rain is over and gone,
> The flowers appear on the earth;
> The time of the singing of birds is come,
> And the voice of the turtle is heard in the land."

His heart was attuned to the words of the song. He looked at the springing greenness about him, listened to the softly blended harmonies of brook and birds and rustling trees, inhaled the refreshing scents of the earth's new life, and lifting his face

to the mild April wind, rejoiced that the world was fair, that he himself was young, that life and labor and love were before him. He forgot the winter, its cold privation, suffering, and death. In a glad abandon of the spirit, that accorded with the new spring-time, he gave himself to dreams of the future, hopes, and promises; and the dreams, the hopes, and promises all centred about the maiden Priscilla.

At length, like the realization of his dreams, an answer to his hopes and promises, the figure of the maiden, indistinct in the gathering dusk, was revealed to him. He had crossed the brook and was mounting the rise of ground on the further side. He saw Priscilla standing on the summit, the gray of her Puritan cloak detaching itself conspicuously from the dark green of the pine forest that was behind her. The nearness of the forest made her appear the child of the wilderness that she was.

A rush of tenderness went over Alden as he looked at her, tenderness for her in her loneliness, and a longing for the right to comfort and protect her. He ascended the slope quietly, and coming near her, stood still and spoke her name.

Priscilla, surprised by his voice, turned quickly to him. "John Alden, you unmannerly lad!" she exclaimed. "Why do you come upon me thus stealthily, like a wolf or an Indian seeking prey? Dost wish to fright me?"

The scant welcome of her words did not discon-

cert Alden. He met it with unabashed tranquillity. He had learned not to mind Priscilla's playful scolding, but to love it rather as a part of Priscilla's self, as much and as distinctive a part as her French ancestry, or her dark hair or darker eyes.

"I think I could not fright you if I would, Priscilla," he answered. "You are a fearless maid. I have known you for such ever since I have known you. And Mary knows you for such. Indeed, Mary is anxious for you on account of your fearlessness and hath sent me as ambassador to fetch you home."

"And if I have no mind to be fetched home?" Priscilla regarded the young man archly, teasingly, and with a baffling laugh seated herself upon a fallen tree-trunk near the shadow of the wood. There she sat much as though it were her intention to remain there always.

Alden immediately seated himself on the ground not far from her. "Then will I wait until you undergo a change of mind," he announced calmly, determinately.

Priscilla laughed softly to herself. "You make an excellent ambassador, Master Alden," she commented in lightly mocking tone.

Alden glanced quickly at the maiden. It seemed to him that in her words there lurked a delicately veiled reminder of that other time when he had come as ambassador to her, and he searched her

face in the dim light, thinking that perchance he might find there the reminder verified. But her face told him nothing. It wore a mask of smiling unconcern.

A barrier was dividing her from him, hiding her thoughts from his understanding, — a barrier that his own conscience had raised when it forbade his speaking for himself. Now his conscience no longer forbade. He was impatient to break down the barrier.

"I make a very poor ambassador," he said, seriously, in answer to her laughing comment of a moment before; and after an expressive pause, "I say so, thinking of the Captain and the part I played for him;" and after another expressive pause, "Priscilla, the Captain is our friend once more. He has forgiven you your answer and me my poor ambassadorship." Alden spoke briefly, jerkily, but his voice was charged with meaning and deep feeling.

Priscilla did not answer. Better than words, however, her silence told him that she understood.

They began talking of indifferent things. Love was not mentioned between them, yet the intonations of their voices, their looks, the pauses that now and then fell between them spoke only of that one thing.

The moon rose while they talked, and the steel blue of the sky changed to gray. Lights flashed out from the little log cabin settlement below them.

They could see the dark curve of the shore and the gleam of the water beyond. But as far as the eye could reach, there was no sight of ships on the sea, or farther than the one street of Plymouth, no sight of houses on the shore. Saving only the moon and the lights of the little settlement, they were alone in the wilderness. But their aloneness was sweet to them; and this, because there was no longer any barrier dividing them. They were together. Both were feeling keenly, exquisitely, the weight of their nearness to one another.

They talked of England and of the friends that they had left there, of the new home and of the friends who had come thither only to find graves waiting them on the hillside. They spoke of sorrow, but reminiscentially, as though sorrow were of the past, not of the present or future.

Priscilla put her hand to her bodice and drew forth a bunch of delicately fragrant blossoms, which she handed to John Alden.

"Look!" she said. "I was feeling lonely and sad this afternoon, when I happened upon these pretty pink flowers. The woods where I found them were sweet with them. Smell them! Are they not fragrant? Didst ever see any like them in old England, John? No; nor did I. I think they must have been invented especially for us, Pilgrims in a strange land, to welcome us, to give us hope and courage."

Alden looked from the flowers to the maiden's face, smiling. "'T is a pretty thought, Priscilla, and worthy of you. Already you make me love the little blossoms. They seem to be whispering rosy promises of a new life, a new home, a new love. Canst hear their whispering, Priscilla?"

He gave the flowers back into her hand, and his own hand having found hers could not leave it, but stayed clasping it and speaking to it the new, strange, immeasurably sweet language of love. And her hand did not leave his, but rested in it as though there it had found its natural dwelling place. There needed no question to be asked or answered between them, save that of the hands and the eyes; and their first kiss was given and taken without a word, in the silence of the spring night, the forest behind them, and before them the sea rolling its solemn monotone on the shore. The spirit of the forest and of the sea entered into their love, making it a thing deep, lasting, infinite.

When at length they came down upon the street and neared the Elder's cottage, they found the Elder and his wife sitting on the doorstep, and Mary Chilton, her fair hair lit into a glow from the candlelight within, standing behind the Elder and his wife and leaning against the door-post.

At the approach of the two laggard ones, Mary

remarked in gentle raillery, "So you have brought the truant home, John Alden, — or should I say the two truants, for are not you a truant yourself, John, when you are so late returning? And did you fear the colony might send a second ambassador to fetch you both home that you have come at last?"

John Alden did not answer. This was not so strange, for Alden was habitually a silent man. But neither did Priscilla answer. And this was stranger, for Priscilla was ever ready with her tongue, even to the point of pertness. Both only laughed, and a new note sounded in their voices, a note which may or may not have been detected by other than themselves.

Alden stopped a moment at the cottage to exchange a few words with the Elder about the sowing to go forward the next day, and about the probability of continued warm weather.

Priscilla, leaving Alden's side, went up the step and into the house. As she passed through the doorway, Mary caught her hand and with a whispered word, followed her into the house.

From his station without by the window, looking into the candlelit room, Alden was able to witness all that took place between the friends. He saw Priscilla, shyly laughing and protesting, draw away from Mary and then, grown suddenly grave, go back to her, put her arm about her, and kiss her, and immediately

breaking from her, vanish up the stairway into the darkness above.

Alden understood the meaning of the little scene, and with a happy catch of the heart reminded himself that his great happiness was no dream, but a reality; that it was true he and Priscilla were sweethearts, promised sweethearts.

He left the Elder's cottage and went on up the street to the Captain's house, the house that was his home as well the Captain's, his home until — and again he was conscious of a happy catch at his heart — until he should make a new home.

He found the Captain seated by a table reading. He went and stood beside his chair, looking down at him and at the book that he was reading. The book, he saw, was the Captain's favorite, "Cæsar's Commentaries."

The Captain, though aware of his coming, did not glance up at him, but straightway burst forth into praises of the man of whom he was reading; his wisdom, his valor, his greatness. In his enthusiasm over Caius Julius Cæsar, he quite forgot John and Priscilla and love, general and particular.

Alden answered his enthusiasm quietly, agreeing with him in all things, and when at length the Captain's praises had run their course and a pause followed, he remarked: "I have obeyed you, dear Captain. I am returned from doing your bidding."

The words, and something in the voice that

spoke them, made the Captain look up at last. Immediately he saw and understood the eloquence of the face bending over him. He was on his feet. John Alden's hand was held in a clasp so vigorous that it pained. The two men looked into each other's eyes.

"Johnny!" was all the Captain said. But it was enough.

. . . . . .

John Alden and Priscilla married. Every one knows that. They lived long and were happy, and their home was on Duxbury Hill near to another home that was the Captain's. Sons and daughters rose up about them, some reflecting the fair hair, blue eyes, and slow, tranquil nature of the father, others the dark eyes and hair and the quick, gay, impulsive nature of the mother. One fancies these sons and daughters of John and Priscilla Alden beautiful and noble as the sons and daughters of a deep, lasting, infinite love should be.

Of course these sons and daughters, in their turn, found the Mayflower, listened to its whisperings, and married as their father and mother had done before them. One of them, a daughter,— she who was most like her mother, no doubt, — married the Captain's son. Hers was the marriage most pleasing to her parents. They felt that in giving her to the Captain's son they were paying in part the great debt of gratitude that they owed their friend Myles Standish.

The Mayflower blooms in other parts of our land than in the Plymouth woods. But nowhere, it is said, does it bloom in such pristine loveliness as there. It is as though the love of John Alden and Priscilla, a love that has become a beautiful classic in the romance of our land, had entered for a moment into the soul of the flower and left with it the secret of its divine essence.

II.

BESIDE THE WATER-GATE.

It was an afternoon in late autumn of the year 1690. A blustering wind from the sea was blowing over the little Dutch town of New Amsterdam, New York the city had been newly dighted some score of years before, but the loyal burghers had not yet learned to give the English title except with sorry grace; the spiteful little monosyllable stuck in their throats and never came without an angry sputter.

The wind that blew so boisterously that autumn afternoon was a contentious wind. It upset boxes and barrels in the region of the docks; it rattled the doors and windows of the low, gable-roofed, high-stooped houses that stretched along the Strand and the Heeren Gracht and the wide sweep of Broadway; and it caught up and drove before it, along the thoroughfares and byways, an army of hectic leaves — russet, gold, and vivid red. It was as though the wind had caught the spirit of the city, a spirit of war.

The wind rattled the windows of the council chamber at the fort. But those within minded it not. They were occupied with other matter than

that of the wind. The room declared the business in which they were engaged. It was cluttered with arms, ammunition, harnesses, and provisions. There was the noise of many voices clamoring, haranguing, and disputing.

At his table, in the centre of the room, the one calm rock of strength in all that seething current of restlessness, uncertainty, and dissatisfaction, sat the people's governor, Mynheer Jacob Leisler. Gravely silent, he listened with a steady patience to the many who came reporting news, more often bad than good, and services, more often unsuccessful than successful, presenting petitions and recounting grievances. Only an occasional deepening of the furrows in his brow and a convulsive tightening of the large fist resting on the table before him gave proof of the weariness and perplexity that assailed the inner man.

The signs of weariness and perplexity, though unnoticed by the many, were not lost upon a certain one in that long file of deputies, petitioners, and complainants, to whom Mynheer was giving audience. This one, more observant than the rest, having despatched his business, went away thoughtful and troubled. Leaving the fort, he turned his steps down the Broad Way, moving slowly and with a serious, preoccupied air that contrasted strangely with his boyish looks. He gave no heed to the passers-by; but they gave much to him.

"'T is the clerk of the town, young Gouveneur,"

remarked a portly, pompous citizen to his companion.

"Humph!" ejaculated the other, more portly and pompous than the first. "He who was once Leisler's pot-boy? A fine management of affairs this, when such as he are in the counsels of the government."

"Oh, the Yonker is not so bad. He is of gentle blood, 't is said, the son of a brave Huguenot soldier. Note you his features and his bearing? See you the French in them?"

"Aye, he is French enough in spite of his Dutch coat and breeches. But French or Dutch I like him not, since he is of the riotous band commanded by that rebel and traitor at the fort."

"Hist! Have a care how you call names him who is still a mighty power in the city."

"I fear not Leisler. His day is almost done."

"Look you," said one round-eyed, rosy-cheeked Dutch maiden to another. "Is not that a handsome Yonker over yonder?"

"Waste not your sighs on him. 'T is Abram Gouveneur. He has no eyes for us, nor for any maid however fair, saving only the daughter of the Heer Governor."

"Mary Leisler, mean you? She and the handsome Yonker are sweethearts, then?"

"Aye, and have been ever since childhood. They were always together, Abram being a sort of ward of Mynheer Leisler. He and his mother

came to this colony as pauper refugees, 't is said, and would have been sold to pay their passage fees, had it not been for Mynheer's kindness."

"So? Tell me, what did Mynheer?"

"Why, he did even pay the passage fees himself, deeming it a foul indignity that people of such gentle blood as the boy Abram and his mother should be sold like to any common felons."

"'T was like Mynheer. One is ever hearing proofs of his goodness and generosity."

"Yes; and in this case his goodness and generosity were not misplaced, it seems. There 's not a finer Yonker in all the province than Abram Gouveneur. . See what the people think of him! They have made him clerk of the town."

"'T is a high office for so young a man. The Yonker must be as clever as he is handsome."

Thus they discoursed about him, some censuring and some approving, by their talk disclosing their own politics whether Leislerian or anti-Leislerian.

Meanwhile, he about whom they talked went on his way, quite unconscious of the comment he was occasioning. As he came to the Strand his face brightened and he quickened his pace. Whatever may have been the thoughts that troubled him, it was evident he had banished them for matter of more agreeable reflection.

Arrived at a certain house on the Strand, he entered by the side gateway. With a few quick

"GOOD DAY TO YOU, BELLE MARIE."

bounds, he mounted the back stoop and, leaning over the open half door, looked in upon the kitchen.

Then, as ever, that kitchen presented a scene of thrift and tidiness. The furniture looked freshly polished, the hearth tiles freshly stained. The pots and pans upon the shelf above the fireplace flashed like new, and the blue and white Delft ware in the corner cupboard shone with the brightness of a recent and very vigorous wiping. The floor had been scrubbed to the perfection of cleanliness, and Mary Leisler, her arms bared and her skirts tucked up, was sprinkling it with sand and then, with rapid, skilful strokes of her broom, marking a border of elaborate pattern around the room. The sunlight, streaming in through the high window above the chimney corner, fell on the girl's golden hair, only half concealed by the little Dutch cap that she wore, making it the most radiant spot in all that radiant room.

"Good day to you, *belle Marie.*"

At sound of Abram's voice, sudden and unexpected, there was a slight ruffling of the girl's Dutch calm, the suggestion of a start, and a faint deepening of the color in her cheeks. "Why, Ab'm, lad, how you did startle me!" she declared in soft, even tones.

Putting aside sand-box, and broom, she came towards him, and opening wide the half door would have had him enter, but Abram shook his head.

"I must not spoil your lovely scroll-work with my clumsy tread," he said, pointing to the pattern in the sand. "Come you with me instead. See how the sunlight beckons from the meadows in the Madge Padge yonder."

He looked off toward the meadows and then into the girl's eyes, with smiling invitation in his glance. He had hoped to see his smile reflected in those eyes, but instead he read a new seriousness in their clear, blue depths.

Mary shook her head, hesitating. She seemed to be searching her mind for an objection to his proposition. "'T is a windy day for walking," she said at last.

"Windy, say you? Well, what of that? Have we not faced the wind before, Marie, you and I together?" He was still smiling and she still serious.

"The mother is out," continued Mary, having bethought her of another objection. "When she returns and finds me gone, she will wonder, perhaps worry."

"You have only to speak to the children. They have tongues. They can tell her whither you have gone."

"The children! There again! They should not be left alone."

"Oh, Marie, give the children a holiday. And give me one as well." Then after a moment's pause and forethought that made his pleading all

the more emphatic, "So long is it since you and I have taken one of our old-time walks together," he declared. "So ardently have I set my heart on this particular walk to-day. Surely, Marie, you will not say me nay."

There was an elusive showing of a smile in her eyes and of dimples in her cheeks, as she looked up at him. "You were ever a wicked tempter, Ab'm," she said, pushing him gently from her with a frown of disapproval. She spoke fondly, a little sadly. "I do wrong to listen to you," and she turned from him as though to end the matter. Then, the next moment, with that delightful inconsistency which is said to be distinctly feminine, she went and put on her hood and long coat.

Certain it was, however, that an unusual mood had taken possession of Mary that afternoon. Abram missed her sunny looks, her merry chatter, and her light-hearted laughter. As they walked side by side along the winding Strand, through the half-ruined Water-Gate, and out into the open country that stretched beyond the city wall, he regarded her wonderingly, a little anxiously. What had come over her? Why was she so grave and uncommunicative? He must know the reason of this new seriousness.

They had been talking at random and with frequent pauses in their conversation. Suddenly Abram broke out tentatively and as if to himself, "Little red hood, I am glad that you came."

"'T is an old friend, this little red hood," the owner of the hood made answer.

"Yes, and therefore am I glad it came, else might I feel myself in strange company."

"You find me strange company?"

"Yes."

"So?"

The short monosyllable spoken with rising inflection encouraged him to proceed.

"You are so serious. Hardly do I know you for my old-time merry playfellow."

Mary did not answer immediately. They had crossed the stream that flowed through the Madge Padge, what is now Maiden Lane, but what was then a pretty little dell, shaded by birch and willow, which the Dutch maids and matrons used for laundry purposes. They had climbed the hill that rose beyond the Madge Padge. And they had come to a grove of ash and maple interspersed with hemlock, a pleasant spot that had been the scene of many of their childhood's happy playtimes. Unconsciously, as though by habit, their steps had led them thither.

Mary seated herself upon a fallen tree trunk and Abram threw himself upon the ground at her feet. The wind sighed through the branches above them; the voice of the brook rising from the valley below spoke to them in plaintive note; and the dead leaves fluttered and fell about them, gentle reminders of the changefulness of seasons and of time.

To Abram, impressionable, imaginative, it seemed that nature was whispering forebodings. And as he gazed upward at Mary, this sense of whispered forebodings was not lessened. She sat with her hands clasped rather stiffly in her lap. Her long coat, dark green like the green of the hemlock, fell about her, touching the ground on either side. Strands of her bright gold hair escaped from the hood were blown across her cheek and forehead, and her eyes looked forth in dreamy scrutiny upon the further bank of the broad, tranquil-flowing river, where the Palisades towered in purple splendor against the sunset sky. Her thoughts, it appeared, had gone wandering. Indeed, she might have been some woodland fairy, a dryad of the grove, so strange she seemed, so unreal, so remote.

"Your merry old-time playfellow, she is gone," she said at last, soberly, in answer to his remark of several moments before, — "gone forever. Expect not to find this other who has taken her place as full of fun and frolic as was she." Then with a downward glance at Abram and in a lighter tone, "Think you I would see lads such as you, Ab'm, and my torment of a brother, Jacob, Jr., growing old and staid and remain the same rattle-pated maid of former days?" she inquired.

In spite of the lightness of her tone, her eyes were still full of the new seriousness, a sad and troubled seriousness, that brought an answering tenderness into Abram's eyes.

"Nay, Marie," he cried, and he spoke with the unreasoning chivalry of a young lover. "Keep young, keep happy, keep merry. Leave the growing old and the sober thinking, as the hard fighting, to us lads."

Mary shook her head. "'T is like you, Ab'm, to speak so," she said. "You were ever too generous with me. But you are wrong. Even though I be a maid, I must bear my part in the struggle. Else would I be an unworthy friend to you, an unworthy daughter to my father."

There was a silence of several seconds between them, during which the sighing of the wind in the trees and the plaintive voice of the brook were the only sounds that broke the stillness. Then Mary spoke again, quietly but with enthusiasm in her tone. "Oh, Ab'm, if you but knew how often I have wished myself a lad like you, that I might give my service, mayhap my life, to the aid of my father and for the people's cause!" and after a short pause, "Ab'm, how seems my father to you?" she asked anxiously.

Abram's eyes fell to the ground beneath her searching glance. The serious, troubled look that had been upon his face when he left the fort returned. But he answered with an assumption of cheerfulness, "As brave and indomitable as ever, Marie."

"They say his enemies are increasing," Mary remarked sadly; "that his friends are falling off;

that his day will soon be done. They call him rebel and tyrant, a peace breaker, a butcher, a brawler — other and more dreadful names." Her voice broke. "Ab'm," she appealed, more as one asking comfort than as one in need of assurance, "you are still true to him, still loyal?"

Abram flung up his head and looked into the girl's face, his own face all aflame with the emotion which he had been so long repressing, "You know that I would die for him — for you, *belle Marie*," he cried, his voice almost harsh in the intensity of its ardor.

Mary raised her hand to her eyes as though to shut out the sight of that glowing, radiant face. The other hand resting in her lap, small and white and yet wonderfully like that large fist of the Heer Governor at the fort, tightened with the same convulsive motion. Then an unusual firmness, almost a sternness, came into her face.

"'T is time we went, Ab'm," she said, rising from her seat on the fallen tree trunk. "See yonder how late it grows," and she walked to the entrance of the grove and pointed to where, above the Palisades on the further shore, the sunset colors were fading in the sky.

Abram followed her with silent protest. He knew her ignoring of his lover's speech to be something more than a pretty maidenly wile. There was that in her face which foretold future conflict, future pain.

They walked for a long time in silence. Mary avoided his tenderly accusing eyes. Not until they came to the brook and she took the helping hand which he held out to her did her glance meet his, and then it was regretfully, sadly.

"Ab'm," she said, as they left the brook behind them and went on across the meadows, "there is something I would speak with you about, something that has been much upon my mind these last few days. Indeed, 't was principally to speak of it to you that I agreed to take this walk with you this afternoon."

Abram turned to her quickly, inquiringly. At last there was to be an end of all this mystery, an explanation of Mary's strange and unusual mood.

"'T is about a maid," Mary continued, "a maid such as I, who has often wished herself a lad that she might help in the great cause to which so much of labor and of life is being sacrificed. One day her mother came to her and said: 'You wish to help, my daughter? Here is your opportunity. A man who has it in his power to make or ruin the cause has made your hand the price of his services. Your father, knowing your loyalty, has answered for you, he has promised you. Shame not your father's word, shame not your own loyalty by a refusal." All this was said in Mary's accustomed soft and even tones. But as she went on it was with an eagerness, a pleading. "What could the maid say? There was but one answer possible. For

what mattered it that she did not love this man? Indeed, what mattered it that she loved some one else and that, mayhap, this some one else loved her? What were a pair of foolish hearts compared with a great cause, a matter of life and death?"

They were nearing the city wall. As they came within the shadow of its grass-grown ruins, Mary turned to Abram. "What think you, Ab'm?" she asked, with a tremor in her voice; "did the maid do right or wrong when she agreed to marry the man who made her hand the price of his services?"

For a moment Abram's admiration of Mary's devotion to what she deemed her duty and loyalty was strongest with him. His doubts and protests and the cryings of his heart were stilled by a realizing sense of the girl's courage and unselfishness of purpose. He knew better than she how matters stood with her father and what were the reasons and needs for her decision. Through the dimness of the twilight and his own blurred vision, he gazed upward at her as she stood on a rise of ground above him. Her hands were folded as if in prayer high upon her bosom and showed strangely pale against the dark of her cloak; a sweet enthusiasm, which was not without its look of sadness and compassion, was shining in her eyes, and to Abram's young and ardent soul she seemed very like a painting of some golden-haired Flemish Madonna, such as those seen in the old Dutch churches across the sea. He lowered his gaze in reverent homage

and answered huskily, "I know not, Marie. I only know that she did nobly."

Then, with the determination of one who has made up his mind to do away with subterfuge and mystery and to stand face to face with the truth, however hard, however cruel, in a voice that was still husky with emotion he said, "Of course, 't is yourself of whom you speak, Marie?"

She nodded.

"And the man?"

"Mynheer Milborne."

At the mention of that name a hot flush overspread Abram's face which, when it had passed, left him pale and rebellious. His lips tightened and he clenched his hands like one strugging against some physical anguish. A vision of Mynheer Milborne, the governor's secretary, rose before him — a dark and gloomy man, nearer the age of Mary's father than of Mary's self, one who had never been a favorite with Abram and the other Yonkers at the fort. "Old gruff and grum," they had called him.

"Nay, Marie," he cried, breaking a long and painful silence, "'t is too great a sacrifice. It shall not be. You shall not marry Mynheer Milborne. Who is Mynheer Milborne to ruin your young life? Surely the cause may prosper without the aid of Mynheer Milborne. There be other men at the fort than Mynheer Milborne."

The bitterness and sarcasm of the lad's tone in-

creased with each reiteration of the name. He flung up his head with the impetuous motion characteristic of him. A proud, defiant love looked from his eyes. "Have you forgotten your old playfellow, Abram Gouveneur?" he asked in a voice suddenly grown tender and yet bitter and sarcastic as before. "What is to become of him when the belle Marie becomes Vrouw Milborne? His love is yours as it always has been, always will be. Do you fling it away?"

"Ab'm!" Mary spoke only the one word, but there was a volume of mingled entreaty and command in her tone. Her hands were held out to him imploringly, and her face, pale as his own, was quivering with protesting, supplicating love. And in her eyes there shone, its radiance undimmed, the light of a steadfast purpose. The daughter had inherited the father's indomitable will.

Abram saw the light and realized the hopelessness of further opposition to that will. He saw, too, the outstretched hands and quivering face, and with the instinct of true love he forgot his own pain in seeking to lighten Mary's pain.

He knelt and raised the outstretched hands to his lips. "Forgive me, *belle Marie*," he faltered brokenly. "I make it hard for you. The pain of giving you up unmanned me for a time. But look, I am strong again," and he raised his face to hers with a brave, reassuring smile.

"Ab'm — dear lad," she said, echoing his faltering, broken tones. In the uncertain light her answering smile showed tremulous, suggesting tears. She bent and kissed his forehead. The sad, dispassionate fervor with which she did it gave consecration to the act.

When she raised her head again it was with a start. Abram's gaze followed hers to the Water-Gate close by. There in the opening stood two men. They were engaged in low and earnest discourse. There was no mistaking the powerful, robust figure of the one; the other was not so easily recognized, for he was shrouded in a long black coat, and his steeple-crown hat was worn low on his forehead so that the lower part of his face was in shadow. But Mary and Abram knew both men immediately. They were the Heer Governor and his secretary.

The fixed gaze of the young lovers arrested the attention of the Governor. He turned in their direction, peered through the dusk, and recognized them. "Mary! Gouveneur!" he called.

They went to him. The quiet dignity that was theirs, as they stood before him and met his searching glance, must have appeased whatever of disturbance or displeasure he may have felt at seeing them together. He turned to his tall, dark companion with a broad smile. "Look to your bride, friend Jacob," he said. "It appears she hath been *overloopen* the country with my young *Geheim-*

schryver in your absence. The maid is a wander-foot, I warn you, and needs close and careful scrutiny." And to Mary, in the same joking strain, "Mynheer Milborne is only now returned from Albany," he declared. "We had just met, here at the Water-Poort, and he was telling me that he had had no dinner and was famished. Go you home with him, child, and treat him to the good mother's *supawn* and *rolliches*." Then to Abram, more seriously, laying a hand affectionately on the lad's shoulder, "As for you, my young Geheim-schryver," he concluded, "come you with me to the fort. There is work to be done and plenty. You will earn your salt to-night, boy."

And so they parted, Abraham and Mary, in the twilight, by the Water-Gate. They parted quite as though theirs was an ordinary parting, Mary going off leaning on Mynheer Milborne's arm, listening to his talk of *supawn* and *rolliches* and other practical wisdoms, and Abram preceding with the Heer Governor to the fort, there to perform the duties of his office; but to their young hearts it seemed that life was ended, that only a joyless existence was left them.

. . . . . .

After long years of sorrow and of suffering, Abram and Mary met again. The cause to which they had sacrificed so much was lost. The people's Governor, the beloved father and patron, was dead; and with him had died his sec-

retary and son-in-law, Mynheer Milborne. Mary was without father or husband. Abram had lain many months in prison, with the other five members of the Governor's council, under a sentence of death. He had escaped to England, and by patient, persevering efforts, and with the help of Jacob, Jr., Mary's old-time "torment of a brother," had pled for justice before the English king, and had succeeded in clearing the name of Jacob Leisler and the names of his family and council from "the lying charge of treason."

Sorrow was behind Abram and Mary. The music of wedding-bells was before them, and the joys of a happy love. They came together with a gladness like that of children, for happiness makes young. The laughing light returned to their eyes and the note of sweet content to their voices. They were playfellows again.

III.

THE SECRET OF THE TREES.

"My dear Lady Spottsgood, you are making a veritable St. Anthony's meal. Where is your appetite? Pray pay the debt you owe your stomach and let Sambo help you to some of that pigeon stew, and to the truffles that go with it; they are not bad, I assure you. And you, Mr. Fountain, you dine like a Mohametan, without wine. Will you not exercise your Christian privilege and drink with us?"

Thus spoke Colonel Byrd, turning from one to another of his guests, a genial, jovial host, playing a part for which nature had fitted him, the prince of hospitality.

Lady Spottsgood, who sat on his right, declared that he was making a gourmand of her. Nevertheless, she submitted to the helping; 't was as impossible, she said, to resist the Colonel's pigeon stew and truffles as it was to resist the Colonel himself.

But the rector, who sat on the Colonel's left, shook his head. He pointed smilingly to his goblet of water. "I prefer the drink that Adam drank in Paradise," he answered.

Miss Theky, a simple little spinster lady, pale-

faced and golden-curled, whose place was next the rector, regarded him with serious approval. "I admire your preference, Mr. Fountain," she said. "Water is a better drink than wine, is it not, Colonel Byrd?"

The Colonel bit his lip, and exchanged glances that might have been termed winks with certain of his gentlemen guests, glances that were lost upon Miss Theky. "Water is an excellent drink, Miss Theky," he rejoined with suave diplomacy. "I doubt not but that if a man drank only of water he would always eat well and sleep well, the stream of life would flow cool and peaceable in his veins, and if ever he dreamed of women, they would be kind."

A gentleman seated near the foot of the table, a young man with little of that debonair, cavalier manner which characterized the Colonel and the most of his gentlemen guests, but rather of a grave and thoughtful mien, hearing what the Colonel said, bent toward the Colonel's daughter, at whose side he was so fortunate as to sit, and whispered in the little ear half hidden beneath the chestnut hair, "Cousin Evelyn, I vow I will drink naught but water if by so doing I may dream of you as kind."

For a fraction of a second Evelyn's pretty almond-shaped eyes looked into her cousin's. "I hope I may be always kind, cousin Daniel," she answered, "in dreams and out of dreams." Then leaning forward and glancing down the table to those at the

further end, she declared with gentle raillery, "I hear my father speaking in praise of water. He is becoming simple in his tastes. Next he will be advocating a primitive mode of living, and his family will be losers."

The Colonel smiled in answer to his daughter's raillery. "I am not so sure but that the primitive mode of life is best," he said. "Mankind, I think, are no gainers by the luxury of feather beds and warm apartments. He sleeps best who sleeps on the ground with a clear sky spangled with stars above him for a canopy. I swear I am oft-times tempted to set fire to my house, and to teach my wife and children to sleep in the open air."

"I think 't is only fair you should consult your wife and children before setting fire to your house," interposed the lady presiding at the foot of the table. She was a beautiful young English woman, this third wife of Colonel Byrd's and mistress of Westover, a near connection of Martha and Teresa Blout. "What do you say, Evelyn?" she inquired, turning to her step-daughter.

"I say that my father should be punished for his cruel threat," said Evelyn. "I am going to tell tales upon him." She addressed herself to the rector. "Would you believe it, Mr. Fountain, my father violated the Sabbath this morning by riding five miles?"

"Tut, tut, Evelyn, spare me," protested the Colonel, laughing. "I have already atoned for

my sin. Did I not pay for it by losing my favorite pair of gold cuff buttons on the way? And seriously, Mr. Fountain, is it a very grave offence to ride upon the Sabbath, do you think?"

The rector regarded his wealthiest parishioner with a leniency that showed he was not without his share of that cavalier easiness of temperament prevailing in colonial Virginia.

"I am for doing all acts of necessity, charity, or self-preservation on the Lord's day as on any other day," he said.

"You are not so severe, then, as that New England magistrate who ordered a man to the whipping-post for daring to ride for a doctor on the Lord's day?" inquired Colonel Spottsgood, a quondam magistrate of Virginia; and every one laughed — every one except Miss Theky.

Miss Theky fixed her serious blue eyes upon Colonel Spottsgood, who chanced to be her brother-in-law as well as Virginia's quondam magistrate. "The Jews held it unlawful even to stand on their defence on the Sabbath," she said reproachfully.

"And were knocked on the head by Antiochus in consequence," retorted her brother-in-law, unrepressed. "We are not Jews, Angelica."

"And on the other hand we are not Indians," interposed Colonel Byrd. "They, like Robinson Crusoe, do not know Sunday from any other day."

"The lazy red man keeps the Sabbath every day

in the week," remarked Evelyn's cousin Daniel with a droll smile that was characteristic of him.

"So they do, nephew," rejoined the Colonel, laughing, "so far as industry is concerned. And as for praying, the Indian prays as the philosopher eats — only when he has a stomach for it. But speaking of eating, how do you like this whip-syllabub that my wife offers you? Do you not think, gentleman, that 't is very like a woman's conversation, pretty but nothing to it?"

At this the men laughed and the ladies protested.

Evelyn, who delighted to answer her father's sallies of wit with teasing, looked towards him, smiling archly. "'T is very unwise of you to speak so, dear sir," she observed. "Now every one will know that you are ruled by your wife — for only men who are ruled by their wives speak of women in that petty fashion. Remember Parson Marij," and she held up a warning finger.

This time it was the ladies who laughed. The Parson Marij to whom Evelyn referred was known throughout the neighborhood as a loud condemner of women and the meekest of husbands as well.

"The gray mare is certainly the best horse in the Marij family," remarked Lady Spottsgood, decisively.

"Yes, but what a creature!" sighed Madam Byrd, lifting her eyebrows with a look of refined disgust.

Miss Theky glanced anxiously at her hostess. "You do not like her?" she inquired. "She is not a lady?"

Mrs. Byrd's lip curled a bit, and Evelyn answered with the epigrammatic terseness that she had inherited from her father, and that was accompanied with a languid grace of utterance that heightened its effect. "Enough of a lady, I imagine, to run into debt and be of no use in her household."

"She cannot run very far into debt," interposed the rector, "for no one will trust her beyond the limit of her husband's salary — and that goes but a short way, I assure you."

"What is her husband's salary?" quickly inquired several inquisitive voices.

"Sixteen thousand pounds of tobacco, I presume, no more no less than what is legally allowed us poor men of the cloth here in the colonies." The rector smiled as he spoke, perhaps it was at the thought that his good fortune had placed him in a parish of rich and generous men, who gave more than the law required.

"Humph," ejaculated Colonel Byrd, with dry humor, "at that rate, Parson Marij is paid no more for his preaching than 't is worth. But, friends," he broke off, "do you realize we are gossiping outrageously? Shall we not change the topic of our discourse?"

"By all means," said the rector. "Pray tell me, Colonel Byrd, how came that grim little

Republican with the cocked hat into your gallery of aristocrats?" And he pointed to a portrait that looked strangely out of place among the lords and ladies, the earls and dukes, and all the other titled persons that smiled or frowned or stared blankly upon the beholder from their high places on Westover's dining-room wall.

The attention of the company was turned to the portrait, and Colonel Byrd surveyed it amusedly as he related its story, telling how it was the likeness of a conceited little clerk of the Virginia House of Burgesses, who had presented it to him, requesting that it might hang among his gallery of peers, for whom the little clerk wished to show his contempt by wearing his hat in their presence.

"I accepted the portrait," the Colonel declared; "but I told him it should hang among the peers as a token that the clerk of the House of Burgesses found the company too good for his keeping and had put on his hat in the act of departure."

While the company were engaged in looking at the portrait and laughing over the Colonel's story, Evelyn stole a glance at the young man beside her. He was not looking at the portrait nor laughing over the story. His gaze and his thoughts too, it appeared, had gone wandering. They were with the fair world without, the smooth, terraced lawns, the tall, waving trees, the fields of wheat and clover, and the distant river view. 'T was a fair world and no mistake, thought Evelyn, as her gaze fol-

lowed his; but, she queried, were one really and truly in love, would one care to stare so fixedly upon it? She drew a soft, fluttering sigh and her face took on the pensive, sad expression that it always wore when she was not smiling or talking.

As if arrested by that unspoken query the young man looked towards her. "Did you speak, Evelyn?" he asked.

"No," she answered, with lowered eyes and faintly smiling lips. "But, had I spoken, you would not have heard. You were very far away."

As she answered, it was as though her beauty — the delicately tinted cheeks, the dark drooping lashes, the errant love lock escaped from waves of chestnut hair, the fair white neck shining beneath a thin blue cloud of gauze, the long, slender waist, the exquisite grace and poise of the whole figure — it was as though all this cried out to the young man for love and homage, such love and homage as had been awarded it so generally in England, where Mistress Evelyn Byrd, the *rara avis* as she was called, had been the toast of the day at the coffee houses and along the Mall.

A look of regret, almost of shame, crossed the young man's face as he regarded her. "I crave your pardon, Evelyn," he said. "I am poor company for you. I am not — Pope — or Peterboro' — or Beau Nash — or my lords of Oxford or of Chesterfield. I am simply a Virginia planter with naught of poetry or of brilliancy to recommend

me." He ended with his quiet, droll smile that, for the moment, seemed to hint at sadness.

With languid ease Evelyn turned and surveyed him, and her look might have meant many things. "Simply a Virginia planter," she repeated after him, slowly and meditatively, "with naught of poetry or of brilliancy to recommend you. I wonder what your friends find to admire in you, cousin Daniel."

Dinner was at an end. The hostess and the rest of the ladies were rising, leaving the gentlemen to their wine. Evelyn rose with them, and as she did so the filmy scarf that she wore about her neck fluttered to the floor.

Gathering it up and folding it about her, her cousin took occasion to whisper in her ear, "Where shall I find you, Evelyn?"

He spoke with a meaning glance, and Evelyn raised inquiring brows.

"You and I have much to say to each other," he added in parentheses, going with her to the door.

She turned on the threshold. "Yes," she said, raising her eyelids slowly and looking with strange, searching gaze into his face. "Let it be at our old haunt, the honeysuckle gate."

With that she left him and crossed the hall to the drawing-room on the further side. As she went she heard some one of the men singing softly in a teasing strain, and as if for her cousin's benefit, the charming old love song, familiar then as now:

"'Drink to me only with thine eyes
And I will pledge with mine:
But leave a kiss within the cup
And I'll not ask for wine:
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine,
But might I of Jove's nectar sup
I would not change for thine.'"

"Pretty song, eh, Custis?" the man queried at the end; and there was a low laugh among the men.

Evelyn listened, the faint, sad smile flitting across her face. "The world will have it that Mr. Daniel Parke Custis loves me," she mused. "But the world is oft-times mistaken."

In the drawing-room, a long, cool room richly furnished and sweet with the perfume of many flowers, Evelyn reposed herself among the cushions and took part in the feminine chit-chat going on about her. She talked with Lady Spottsgood of the poultry that her ladyship was raising; of the ginseng, that plant of scarlet berries, beneficial in coughs and colds, that grew in abundance on the Spottsgood plantation; and of the deer which were great pets with the Colonel, and which were allowed to wander familiarly about the house to the destruction of the Spottsgood china and glass, a destruction that Lady Spottsgood appeared to regard with a forbearance and good humor quite surprising in a housewife. Of Miss Theky, Evelyn inquired concerning Miss Theky's pet, the dog upon whom,

for want of a better object, it was hinted, Miss Theky had bestowed her maiden affections. The little spinster's eyes filled with tears as she answered. This day, which chanced to be her birthday, was like to have been a day of mourning for her, she said. Her little dog, who was of course the sweetest and gentlest of creatures, had offended her brother-in-law, Colonel Spottsgood, and in consequence by that same brother-in-law had been condemned to die. However, she had entreated most piteously for the life of her darling, and on the plea that the day was her birthday and that naught should be denied her, had obtained pardon for him.

Evelyn attended to all that was said graciously and sympathetically, as was her way. But when Mrs. Byrd seated herself at the harpsichord and the ladies gathered round to listen to her playing and singing, Evelyn quietly left the drawing-room and wandered out into the garden. The guests at Westover that Sunday were old friends and neighbors, she stood on no ceremony with them, and could go and come among them as she pleased.

Down by the "honeysuckle-gate," a summer drowsiness prevailed. The sunlight flashed on the river and sifted through the green branches overhead. The bees buzzed loudly and insistently, and scents of clover and of garden flowers hung heavy in the air. And on and about the gate itself and the vine that twined over its intricate iron tracery

the humming-birds, those exquisite fairies of the feathered kind, flitted to and fro, drinking the nectar that flowed for them in the yellow flower cups.

With so soft and light a tread did Evelyn go down the garden path that the young man, who waited her coming at the gate, did not hear her. She was obliged to speak to make her presence known.

"I am come to keep my tryst," she said; and when at sound of her voice the young man turned she was standing only a few yards from him, smiling, serene, perfect in her loveliness.

"At last," he cried. "You were long in coming, Evelyn; or, at least, to my impatient spirit it seemed that you were long." He made a move to go to her and would have bent to kiss her hand, but the expression of her eyes stopped him.

"What have you and I to say to each other, Daniel?" she asked, with the look of one who wishes to dispense with trifling and to have to do only in very earnest.

Immediately the young man dropped the cavalier air that was rare with him, and looked into his cousin's eyes gravely and questioningly. "Evelyn, when may I have my answer?" he asked.

"'T is ready for you here and now," she returned with a glimmering of her sad smile.

Still looking into her eyes, the young man cried, "Nay, Evelyn, not that answer, I beg of you." And when her expression did not change, "You were

different at dinner, Evelyn. You said you hoped you might be kind."

"And what is being kind?" she answered. "Is not saving you from making a marriage of convenience being kind?"

Before her searching gaze the young man's glance fell from her face to the silken folds of her pale blue-green gown. "And do you not think that I love you, Evelyn?" he asked in lowered voice.

"As a cousin, as an old friend, yes, perhaps; but, Daniel, you are capable of loving a woman, the woman, better than that."

The young man lifted his glance from the blue-green gown to the sad, pensive face, and above to the crescent of moonstones that glistened like a crescent of tears on the white forehead. "It may be that you are right, Evelyn," he said. "Yet, I ask you, while we were happy in one another's companionship, might not the greater love come in time?"

Evelyn shook her head. "We have been happy in one another's companionship a long while, our whole lives," she answered, "and the greater love has not come." As she spoke, she drew the soft, fluttering sigh that had escaped her once before that day, and looked away with a weariness of expression.

The sigh and the expression had the appearance of symbols of *ennui*. "I bore you," said young

Custis, with a suggestion of hauteur. "I see that you are not to be persuaded. I will desist from further argument," and he too looked away.

A moment later Evelyn's slender hand was laid upon the young man's ruffled sleeve. "Let us not quarrel, Daniel," she said, looking into his face with a smile brighter than any she had yet given him that afternoon at the honeysuckle gate. "We have been good friends always, we must not change now. We must remain good friends; for we shall have need of one another's friendship, shall we not, when our fathers learn of our decision and scold us roundly for spoiling the project they have so long cherished for us?" and she ended with her thin, silvery laugh.

Under the influence of the smile, the laugh, the words, and the sweet mood that prompted them, the young man's hauteur quickly and completely vanished. He regarded Evelyn with a look such as that with which a man might regard a sister of whom he was both fond and proud; a look which, had a woman loved him, must have pained while it pleased.

"Quarrel with you, Evelyn?" he exclaimed heartily. "One would not if one could. You are too much the perfect lady to make it possible for any one to quarrel with you." He glanced away to the river and then back to the girl's face, "And, Evelyn," he said, "if I may not be your lover, I will be your friend, always your friend, more than

ever your friend. And indeed I fancy I shall never come to be another woman's lover so long as I may keep your friend."

"So you will think, perhaps, until you come to be that other woman's lover," answered Evelyn, and as she spoke her eyes were hidden beneath the shadow of her lashes. Then she lifted her glance, and with a showing of her bright smile which had yet a suggestion of her sad smile, leaning against the gate, she surveyed her cousin musingly. "I wonder what she will be like," she queried. "'T would be interesting to hazard a guess."

Led by her graceful guidance, the young man fell easily in with her half-trifling mood. He leaned upon the gate beside her, and answered her smile with one of his. "Pray do," he exclaimed. "Your guess cannot fail to be of interest to him for whom you guess."

Evelyn grew thoughtful and was silent for a while. Then she said, "She will be very unlike me and better suited to you and your plantation home. Like the clovers growing in the meadow yonder, her loveliness will be fresh, simple, sturdy, while I, who am more like the roses climbing over the trellis here beside us, am what I am only because of excessive pruning and care."

"Evelyn, you underrate your own inherent charm," interposed the young man.

But Evelyn shook her head. Still leaning on the gate and resting her chin upon her hand, she

looked off to the river and the further shore where the scene was one of a wild, woodland beauty, a scene strangely and yet enchantingly in contrast with the girl herself, who was so delicate, so refined, so exquisite, so very nearly artificial in the perfection of all arts and graces.

Young Custis studied her with his eyes, and after a pause, in low, meditating tone, he remarked, "Evelyn, I wonder if you will ever love."

A shadow as of sudden pain crossed Evelyn's face. She lifted her head and without looking at her cousin, she queried, "Have we not talked of love enough for one day? I confess I grow somewhat weary of the subject," and then, with a glance over her shoulder, "And tell me, who may these gentlemen be coming towards us down the garden path."

The young man turned and peered up through the avenue of trees, to where, with the trees above them and about them, and the red façade of the house a glimmer through the green, two gentlemen, alike as to periwigged heads, frilled waistcoats, and ruffled sleeves, walked arm in arm together, talking and laughing in congenial, friendly fashion.

"They are our fathers, Evelyn," answered the young man; and with a long-drawn sigh and a hint of his droll smile he added dryly, "I 'll warrant they 'll not laugh so heartily when once they learn of our decision."

Evelyn echoed his sigh with one of her soft, flut-

tering ones, and then remarked half playfully, half seriously, "The poor dear sirs! Let us break it to them as gently as we can."

As the two gentlemen drew near the honeysuckle gate, Colonel Byrd was heard declaring, "I do not believe that we would ever find the raising and exportation of hemp of profit to us. Labor is so much dearer here than in Riga and other hemp-raising countries of the East, and freight is so much higher. The price that makes the hemp-raisers of the East rich would ruin us. And even if this was not so, and if the king would buy our hemp at a paying price, the merchants would manage to load our hemp with so many charges that they would run away with the greater part of the profit. Ours would be the case of the poor fishing-hawk upon whom the bald eagle pounces down and robs of the fish which the hawk has been at such pains to catch." And then observing his daughter and young Custis, the Colonel broke off, "But speaking of home products, here, if I mistake not, are some things of our own raising — are not these our son and daughter, brother Custis?"

"Aye," returned the other, "and let us hope they will repay the care and cost that we have put upon them better than would the hemp."

Both fathers began a jesting laugh that ended suddenly at sight of the sober faces before them.

"Well," exclaimed the elder Custis, after a pause, "we do not meet with a very warm recep-

tion;" and Colonel Byrd declared, "By their looks they seem to bid us go. Come, let us stay no longer in a company where we are not appreciated." The two gentlemen made a move to pass through the gate and out upon the river road.

Evelyn laid a detaining hand upon her father's sleeve, and Daniel, after glancing at the girl who stood silent with downcast eyes, waiting for him to speak, drew himself together and said, sturdily, "Gentlemen, you find us dull and mute. 'T is because we dread to speak and tell you something that will disappoint you, that will shatter a hope that you have cherished for us a long while."

At the young man's words, a look of understanding, of dark, frowning understanding, appeared on the faces of the two elder men. Colonel Byrd fixed a grave gaze upon his daughter, and Colonel Custis turned to his son, inquiringly sharply, "How now, sirrah, have you been bungling matters?"

At this Evelyn raised her eyes and addressed herself to Colonel Custis. "There has been no bungling, uncle," she said. "Your son has made his suit to me like a gentleman, and as you would wish to have him."

"And you have refused it, Evelyn?" questioned her father; "and on what ground, may I ask?"

"His love is not of the sort to satisfy me," she answered with a touch of pride.

"EVELYN, I WONDER IF YOU WILL EVER LOVE."

Colonel Byrd's arched brows went upward, seeming to inquire, "Is there any love under the sun that can satisfy you?"

Colonel Custis scowled, uttered a low-voiced, inarticulate imprecation, and turned on his heel, motioning his son to follow; and as the two started up the path together, he called back over his shoulder, "Since 't is the girl who balks, brother Byrd, I have nothing to say. I have long since learned the futility of all attempt at reason or argument upon a woman."

Left alone, Evelyn and her father stood for a few moments in silence, Evelyn leaning against the gate, her eyes downcast, and the Colonel regarding her with a look in which anger and pride, affection and sarcasm blended.

Pride and sarcasm were predominant, when at length the Colonel remarked: "Evelyn, my love, is it your ambition to break the hearts of all the men on both sides of the Atlantic?"

Evelyn lifted her eyes. "Don't," she said.

Given a better view of her face, for the first time her father observed that she was very pale, and that her eyes shone brilliantly like the eyes of one in pain. He took her by the hand and drew her nearer to him. "Evelyn, my little girl," he cried, "can it be that you love this fellow, this cousin of yours? I thought that it was Peterboro' you loved. Now I am at a loss to know who it is."

Evelyn gently took away her hand and turned

from him. "Don't ask me," she said, "for I cannot tell you, — not even you. My love has been a secret a long while. Let it remain a secret, as much a secret as that which the trees are forever whispering over our heads. And who can tell? — perhaps in time my secret may become a part of that same eternal secret!"

She ended with a smile sadder than any that had gone before; and then, the light of quiet laughter breaking through the trouble in her eyes, she leaned against her father's arm and looked up into his face. "Come, sir," she ordered, "let us not forget our guests. The gentlemen, I know, are already pining for another bottle of your Canary wine, and the ladies, I 'll be bound, are at this very minute peering at us from the drawing-room windows, jealous of me, no doubt. Come, let us delay no longer, lest we bring ourselves into disfavor with them all."

. . . . . .

Mistress Evelyn still holds court. Her portrait hangs on the walls of Brandon, on the lower James, not far from her old home; and in immortal beauty and with the same pensive smile upon her face, the fair scion of Westover continues to win hearts. Nor is that all. In Westover, the old home itself, on winter nights, when the Yule log burns on the hearth, casting grotesque shadows in the twilight, the tap, tap, tap of her slippers may be heard, and her soft, fluttering sigh, as her lady-like ghost

gently steals through the long corridors and up the broad stairs.

Evelyn died of love, tradition says, but does any one know for love of whom she died? Was it Peterboro' she loved, that aged gallant of Queen Anne's court, and one of the shrewdest and wittiest of that shrewd and witty day? Peterboro' married the singer Anastasia Robinson and died the hardy reprobate that he had lived, "laughing and mocking in the intervals of agonizing pain and entertaining a company of ten at dinner immediately before the end." Or was it her cousin Daniel Custis that Evelyn loved, him with whom it was designed by their proud and wealthy fathers that she should make a marriage of convenience, thus uniting two aristocratic families and two fine estates? Daniel Custis married a woman of just such fresh, simple, and sturdy loveliness as Evelyn had prophesied that she would be, little Patsy Dandridge, she who later in life became world-famous as the wife of George Washington; and he died, this Daniel Custis, quietly and peacefully as he had lived, leaving behind him the record of a pure, upright, and industrious life. Or was it neither of these men, Peterboro' or Custis, that Evelyn loved, but instead some man who, nameless in history, can be known merely as an imaginary creation? We cannot say. We only know that Evelyn never married, and that while still young and beautiful she faded broken-hearted to the grave.

In the garden of Westover Evelyn lies sleeping, a melancholy inscription upon her tomb, and the oaks that whisper over her grave are forever telling and yet never telling the secret which, tightly locked in her heart, died with her and now lives only as a part of the eternal secret of the trees.

IV.

A CROWN THAT STUNG.

Agnes Surriage slept late the morning following the Governor's ball. As she took her first peep at day through the shutters that darkened her room, she saw that the sun was high in the heavens and shedding a clear, warm radiance upon the little city outspread before her view. Conspicuous in the morning brightness were the steeples of King's Chapel and of the Old South Meeting-house, the English colors flying from the province house, the new and imposing hall that the munificent Mr. Faneuil had just bestowed upon the city, and the three peaks of Beacon Hill that marked the one end of colonial Boston.

Agnes turned from the window with what was nearer a sigh than a yawn, as she reflected on the lateness of the hour. It used not to be so in the old days at Marblehead, she thought. Then she had been up with the birds and in time to see the first hint of morning flushing sky and ocean. A feeling of freshness and of vigor had come with the birth of each new day, and her burden of poverty and toil had rested lightly on her strong, supple shoulders. Now the burden had slipped

from her shoulders, she had undergone a change like that of the butterfly, she was a "grand" lady. She could lie sleeping while the sun went on its course unattended. She needed only to air her pretty wings in the sunshine and to sip honey from the flowers, and her day's work was done. But was she any the more fortunate in her butterfly state, she wondered, than when she had grubbed, a dingy little worm in the dust?

She looked at the gown of cream-colored silk, the fair creation that had won the admiration of the men and the envy of the women at the ball. It was lying carelessly upon a chair, just as she had left it the night before. She looked at the roses that had nodded from among her dark curls and of which it had been whispered that, beautiful as they were, they could not match the roses in her cheeks. They were withering on her dressing-table in the midst of jewel-box and powder-puff, of mirror, fan, and gloves. She looked at her reflection in the mirror, her dark, radiant loveliness, and she recalled certain words that she had overheard when, in the cream-colored gown and with the roses in her hair, leaning on her guardian's arm and happy in his approving smile, she had stood on the threshold of the Governor's ball-room and the world therein assembled — a world which in a small provincial way so perfectly reproduced the fashion, pride, and courtly consequence of the world across the sea.

"What beauty!" one of colonial Boston's gallants had exclaimed, and Agnes had been forced to blush, so long and admiring had been his gaze.

"Yes," an aristocratic dame had answered, in coolly critical tone, "but it may prove her undoing."

And Agnes, poor girl, had understood the dark hint. As a butterfly, she was learning to understand much of which, as a dingy little worm, she had never dreamed, and the new understanding was not wholly beautiful.

Agnes ate her breakfast with a preoccupied air that morning, watered her flowers with less of love than she had ever before shown them, and sat down to her harpsichord and went through her exercises in a mechanical way that proved her heart was not in her playing. She was curled up among the cushions in the window-seat of her parlor, her own special parlor in the boarding-house that served as her temporary home, and was reading "Pamela," the tale that had so often charmed her and moved her to tears, but for which she had only a half interest that morning, when a knock, that was apologetic and autocratic at the same time, announced her tutor.

With a cool nod, Agnes received the worthy Mr. Peter Pelham, he who had recently returned from foreign parts with a store of foreign learning, grace, and art which it was his business to impart at a high rate of interest to the rising generation of Boston's elect. And while Mr. Pelham was

laying aside his walking-stick and his three-cornered hat and carefully smoothing his immaculate white neck-band and wrist-bands, Agnes threw down her book and rose slowly to drop the courtesy that came, as a somewhat tardy answer, to the profound bow which her tutor had made upon entering.

"Good-day to you, Mr. Pelham," she remarked, looking not at him, but out of the window. "'T is a pity you have put yourself to the trouble of coming this morning. I shall not take any lesson to-day."

Mr. Pelham lifted his eyes with an autocratic look that seemed to say, "What new whimsey is this?" But Agnes was beyond the age that trembles at the schoolmaster, and Mr. Pelham's eyes fell to the floor apologetically. "This will make two lessons within a week that you have missed, Miss Surriage," he observed, not without the insistent note of the pedagogue. "You cannot expect to progress very rapidly in your music at such a rate."

Agnes made a motion of impatience and petulancy. "You know that I can never play when I am not in the mood for playing," she retorted.

Mr. Pelham shrugged his shoulders and, with the manner of one who yields to a spoiled child, he went to take up the walking-stick and hat that he had laid aside.

Agnes turned to him quickly. "Stay a moment,

Mr. Pelham," she said. "I want to talk to you, to ask you some questions."

She seated herself beside a pretty little slim-legged, highly polished table of a style of furniture very much in vogue at that date in colonial Boston, and motioned for him to take the seat on the further side.

On the table between them, and almost hiding them from each other, stood a tall vase filled with roses — red roses, such as those which had nodded from Agnes' dark curls at the ball the night before. Agnes drew one of the roses from the vase and began toying with it upon the table.

"Mr. Pelham," she began, "you are a very wise man — you have travelled and read and studied — you know a great deal about a great many things." She spoke part assertively, part inquiringly, and paused as if desiring a confirmation of her statement.

The schoolmaster dropped his eyes in apologetic fashion, but a smile of pedagogic vanity played about his mouth. "I trust that I do not shame the dignity of my calling," he replied, with a little deprecatory cough.

Agnes, busy with her own thoughts, seemed only half to heed his answer. There was wistfulness in her look, as though she were hoping to sound untried depths of knowledge in the worthy Mr. Pelham's scholarly brain. "I am learning a lesson outside of my books and my music and dancing,"

she said. "I suppose one should call it the lesson of life. I am learning the meaning of rank and blood and title. I am learning that a stamp of the crown upon a piece of paper is as sacred as one's honor, that a coach with armorial bearings can carry one through the world more proudly than can virtue and justice and prudence, and that the line that divides those who have the proper stamp on their paper and the proper symbols on their coach from those who have not is more rigid, more binding, more impassable than the line that divides the good from the bad. Do I read my lesson aright, Mr. Pelham, or do I read it crookedly? And if I read it aright and 't is true what I have said, what is it that has turned the world topsy-turvy?" The wistfulness of her look was intense as she glanced past the roses to the school-teacher.

Mr. Pelham answered the look with one of superior wisdom. Yet, in spite of his look of superior wisdom, it is probable that he knew very little of what was troubling the girl. Of the facts of her history he was not ignorant. He knew as did the rest of colonial Boston that she was of low birth (of low birth, that is, as interpreted by the aristocrats of the day), that her parents were poor, hard-working fisher-folks, and that she herself had been a scrub girl at the Fountain Inn of Marblehead and had thence been lifted by the generous hand of Boston's young collector, Mr. Harry Frankland, who had appointed himself her guardian, to the place

she now occupied, that of a well-bred, well-educated, thoroughly refined and cultivated lady. Mr. Pelham knew too what all of colonial Boston did not know, — for Agnes was of a modest, retiring disposition, — that she was a girl of unusual talents and mental aptitude. In music, reading, and drawing she had shown quite remarkable proficiency, and she was, indeed, the most creditable of all his pupils.

All this Mr. Pelham knew. But he did not know — for how could he, unimaginative, narrow-minded pedant that he was — the doubts and questionings, the regrets, the fears and longings that had come with the new position, the battlings of heart and conscience that were close at hand.

Yet, although he did not know, Mr. Pelham's look of superior wisdom never faltered, and with a patronizing smile he answered, "You are young, Miss Surriage, and 't is the fault of youth to cry out against the injustices of the world. If you had lived as long as I, you would know that the world is not turned topsy-turvy, but continues to revolve, an orderly and well-regulated world in its accustomed orbit; that every station in life, however humble, has its own uses and advantages; and that virtue, though 't is not always so speedily recognized as the stamp on the paper and the symbol on the coach, is nevertheless always virtue and as such is respected if not according to its merit, at least according to its wont."

The schoolmaster's words had a very correct, oracular ring, but they failed to satisfy Agnes. She put up her hand to her forehead. "I see you do not understand," she said. Then she rose. "But I keep you from your business, Mr. Pelham," she continued. "I will not detain you longer in talk that is of no moment. Go to your other pupils. They will stay within the prescribed school-room limits of books, music, and dancing. They will not take to playing truant as I have done in a tangle of foolish questions. Good-day to you, Mr. Pelham," and she ended with a low, graceful courtesy which Mr. Pelham himself had taught her and which was the one approved by the fashionable Boston of the day.

There was something authoritative, almost queenly about the girl. Indeed, those who had known her in the old days would have found it hard to identify the poor fisher-maid of Marblehead with this dark beauty of the drawing-room who spread her rustling, brocaded skirts in such a regal fashion and addressed the schoolmaster with a suggestion of hauteur in voice and manner.

The schoolmaster had risen too, and stood looking at her rather amazedly. To him she was then, as ever, an enigma written in a language of which, in spite of his extensive linguistic learning, he had no knowledge. In his ignorance he took refuge in a sarcastic smile. "Good-day to you, Miss Surriage," he returned. "Since I can be of no further

service to you I will, as you suggest, take my leave." He leisurely gathered up hat and walking-stick, and was in the act of departure. On the threshold of the door he turned. "When next I call, Miss Surriage, I trust that I shall find you in the mood for a music lesson," and he elaborately bowed himself out of the room.

When he was gone Agnes bowed as he had bowed, and with a perfect mimicry of his voice and manner echoed his suave "Good-day to you, Miss Surriage, and when next I call I trust that I shall find you in the mood for a music lesson." Then she broke into a low laugh that was not very hearty. He who was now so smilingly patronizing, she thought, would be among the first to point the finger of shame at her, if ever she should lose her way upon the straight and narrow path and wander from it. She could easily fancy him frowning her down, and with him her other tutors and her schoolmates, those gentle, high-born maidens, who had always been her friends rather half-heartedly, and had praised her, her work, her music, her reading, and her drawing, with reservations, remembering the story of her parentage and toil, and regarding her with eyes of curious wonder.

And it was not only her school world that she pictured frowning her down. Even more vividly she saw herself condemned to social ostracism by the world of fashion, — the Amorys and Apthorps, the Hutchinsons, Prices, Shirleys, and Auchmutys,

— those men and women who, attired in imported velvets, silks, and satins, inhabited the north or court end of the city; who worshipped at King's Chapel, the Episcopal church of Puritan Boston; who held the money, offices, and power of the colony; who were allied to the first families of England, and who represented rank and royalty in the newfound Western home.

In spite of its historic prettiness and quaintness, that little, old-time, provincial world of fashion was a narrow, trivial sort of world. Distinct from the sturdier Puritan stratum of Boston society, and not yet grown to a sufficient manhood to resent the tyranny of the mother country, it scrupulously followed the follies as the fashions of the world across the sea. It was a proud, insolent, all-regal world, and to the girl who had come thither, fresh from her seaside home, and with a spirit as free as the air she had breathed and as broad as the ocean view upon which she had gazed as a child, it oft-times proved a prison.

But though to Agnes this world was oft-times a prison, to the world she was a novelty, something to interest it, to set its gossip-loving tongue to wagging. Therefore she found herself petted, flattered, courted, with reservations to be sure such as those withheld by her schoolmates, but with a genuine enthusiasm. And while Agnes did not at all depend for her happiness upon such benefits as this petty little world could offer, she could not

endure the thought, so galling to a proud, sensitive nature, that this same petty little world might, upon provocation, turn its back upon her and leave her to endure the daily torture of social ignominy.

Yet even more than the frowns of her school world and the world of fashion, Agnes dreaded the accusations of her own conscience and the shame that, should she take a step unsanctioned by religion, would be put upon her by her old friends, those rough but honest fisher-folk of Marblehead. At thought of those old friends and especially at thought of her parents and her younger brothers and sisters, who were so admiring, almost reverential, in their love for her, Agnes threw herself upon the window seat of her parlor, her parlor that in spite of its every luxury could not bring happiness, and gave way to a storm of passionate weeping.

Yet even while she wept, her heart cried to Frankland, to him whom she had been taught to call her guardian, who had taken her from the humble home where she had known no better than to be happy, and raised her to her present pinnacle of genteel grandeur, who was the cause of all her doubts and questionings and heart-breaking regrets, but whom, alas for her peace of mind and her future welfare, she loved in a measure that could outweigh the doubts and questionings and heart-breaking regrets, the dazzling though prison-like world of fashion and the old loves and the old life as well. She knew that there were thorns in the

crown he offered her, thorns and nettles that would scratch and sting and smirch her brow, but she could almost forget the thorns and nettles, she thought, while wearing those bright blossoms that made the crown beautiful. Her heart told her that it was not his fault that the thorns and nettles were there, not his fault that he could not marry her, but must sacrifice his honorable and generous impulses to the impassable barriers of rank, family, and ancestral pride. The world was turned topsy-turvy and her own vision of right and wrong had become blurred, but she could not blame him that these things were so.

He was her friend, as from the first so to the last, she was sure of that, her friend certain to remain true when the world frowned and one by one other friends fell from her. He was not of the class who love lightly and forget. He was a brave, noble, knightly soul. This she knew as she knew her catechism and her Lord's prayer. Once she had believed him of the stuff of which fairy tales are woven; but that was when, a gold-laced, berib-boned, beruffled, and bewigged gentleman, he had flashed upon her toilsome horizon at the Fountain Inn where, in a pool of soap-suds, she had knelt scrubbing the tavern floor; and he had smiled upon her and looked with pity on her bare feet and dropped into her hand the gold coin that was to buy her first pair of shoes. Of course that had happened long ago, had become a part of a past

THUS THE TRAGIC BATTLE OF HER YOUNG LIFE WAS FOUGHT.

existence, and she had lived to see her godlike hero descend from his pedestal and mingle a man with other men. Yet he had been always so generous, so courtly, and so kind, that there still hung about him a reminiscence of the divine halo. It was not so much that he had grown less godly as that he had grown more human. And when she thought of the night before, of the ball, and remembered his touch on her hair and his kiss, she knew not whether she liked it better or not so well that her god had become so very much a man.

And the crown he offered her, should she put it from her or should she stoop to receive it? Should she give up him who was sun, moon, and stars to her, or those other little worlds which were but a dark corner of the universe in comparison, but which, nevertheless, threatened to grow great with flashings of angry light and rumblings as of dire earthquakes? The need and the impossibility of answer brought on a fresh storm of weeping. Thus, with sad waverings and yearnings, and trials of the spirit, and with piteous gropings for the light, the tragic battle of her young life was fought.

The morning wore away and at length the noise of footsteps upon the flagstone walk beneath the window, growing more frequent, told that the business world was returning home from Town House and Custom House, Province House and Market, for the recreating quiet of the noon hour and for dinner.

Agnes was calm again. She had bathed her eyes and smoothed her tumbled hair and was sitting curled up among the cushions of her window seat once more. She had, however, abandoned all pretence of reading. "Pamela" lay face downward on the floor, telling a tale other than that which had proceeded from the wonder-working brain of the renowned Mr. Richardson.

The sound of jest and laughter from a merry group of men passing below came up to Agnes. And just beneath her window, some one of the group loitering behind, as the rest went on down the street, was heard calling after them, "At the 'Orange Tree,' six o'clock to-night, gentlemen. Do not fail. We must give the Captain a rousing welcome and show him how handsomely we do things here in the provinces."

Agnes scarcely heard the answering cheer and laugh. At sound of the voice, strong, clear, and ringing, that of a healthy, happy manhood, a glad light more eloquent than a smile had lighted her face. She opened the door hospitably and withdrew to the recess of the window, and stood there, with her back to the door, joyously anticipating and yet dreading the coming interview.

A moment more and Mr. Harry Frankland stood on the threshold. He was very fine that morning in powdered wig and gold lace coat, brocaded vest, ruffled sleeves, and silver shoe-buckles. He looked what in truth he was, a handsome, brave,

and gallant gentleman. His three-cornered hat was raised to his heart in the act of bowing, and a pleased, anticipatory smile parted his lips, as he glanced at the picture framed in the window, the slender, graceful figure in the pale corn-colored gown against the rich blue damask of the hangings.

Agnes turned, the glad light still on her face, and Frankland went forward and took her hands in his, and looked with long, lover-like gaze into her eyes. But he did not kiss her; a kiss was still a sacred thing between them, not to be given or taken lightly. Nor did they speak for a moment.

They sat down side by side upon the window-seat, and then Frankland said, "I could not go by without stopping to see how you had survived the ball. Your dissipations have not robbed you of your beauty, little lady. I know not whether I like you better as you were last night in the ball gown, with the paint and powder, the jewels and the flowers, and amid the bright, laughing, dancing world, or as I find you now in the dimness and quiet of your own parlor, clothed in this simple morning gown, your own dark loveliness your one jewel."

"I am better as I am," Agnes answered quietly, modestly, as though disclaiming all right to the magnificence of the ballroom.

"Yes," declared her companion, "you are better as you are, I vow; for you are alone, I may have you to myself. Last night you were beset by a

host of eager young gallants and I, your old guardian, was quite pushed to the wall."

Agnes must smile at that. Her "old guardian," as it chanced, was not yet turned of thirty. Indeed, had it not been for the full white wig that he wore and that hid his bonny brown hair, with his fresh English complexion and his laughter-haunted eyes, one might have deemed him a veritable boy.

Agnes shook her head reprovingly at him. "An old guardian," she remarked, "would know better than to speak in such flattering terms to his young ward. You are like to spoil me, sir. Pray let us change this very personal topic. Tell me, what is the news about town to-day?"

At that Frankland began talking enthusiastically of the arrival in Boston of his brother, the popular young commander of the English frigate "Rose," and of the entertainments that were being set on foot in his honor; of the dinner that was to begin them and was to be given by himself that evening at the Orange Tree Inn, and to which the elect of Boston's young men were bidden.

Like all his friends at home, Frankland declared laughingly, the Captain imagined the provinces a wilderness, and believed that he (Mr. Harry Frankland) must be bereft of his senses, that he could remain contented in them so long. He was determined the Captain should undergo a change of mind before sailing away, should carry back a good report to England. He turned proudly to

Agnes. Might he bring his brother to see her? His brother must know what a rare beautiful flower was blooming in these Arcadian wilds.

Agnes looked sadly away. Frankland's mention of his brother renewed that trouble of the spirit which his own presence had for a moment dispelled. To her, this brother stood for the Frankland family and for the obstacles that family would raise in opposition to a marriage between Mr. Harry Frankland and herself — obstacles such as rank, fortune, and a future baronetcy, which things, alas, in the worldly world where their lot was cast, counted for more than natural dictates of the heart and manly honor.

Frankland was quick to detect the girl's change of mood and expression. "Why do you sigh, child?" he asked anxiously. "Do you not like my praises?"

"If only they were that," she answered, — "praises to a child. But I am no longer a child and you no longer praise me as a child. I am learning and you are helping to teach me the lesson of sorrow that makes me a woman."

Frankland took her hand in his and began stroking it tenderly. Quick-coming shadows had chased away the laughter from his eyes. "I teach you sorrow, Agnes, — God forgive me!" he murmured in a tone of sharp contrition.

"I have been thinking of home," continued Agnes, with her eyes fixed as if on imaginary pict-

ures, "and of my childhood days and of the old friends."

Still stroking her hand, "You love them, Agnes, I know," said Frankland; and then after an eloquent little pause, "Better than me?" he asked.

Her answer was a quick pressure of the hand and a look more expressive than words. She rose abruptly, — abruptness was a part of her intense, impulsive nature, — walked the length of the room and back, while Frankland followed her compassionately with his eyes, and stood before him regarding him with a look of piteous appeal.

"Why were you born a gentleman?" she asked helplessly; "or why was not I born a lady?"

Frankland took her hands, kissed them, and looked up, sorrowing with her and for her, into her face. "Or why, dear love, were we not born in that golden age," he said, with a sadly tender, sadly playful smile, "before the careless nymph Pandora opened her box and let escape pride, insolence, vainglory, and all those other ills that have made this world uninhabitable for two loving hearts such as ours?"

With a look of piteous appeal still in her eyes and in the same helpless tone Agnes continued, "What shall we do? Whither shall we turn? Oh, we are like two children going hand in hand into a dark room, knowing not where to look for light nor how we may come out."

Her words, her tone, and, more than these, the

sorrow in her eyes, stirred Frankland to the very springs of his manhood. With a quick, compassionate, protecting gesture, he rose and took the girl in his arms and raised her face to his.

"Agnes," he said, "look into my eyes. Tell me that you know that however dark the rest of the world may prove, the light you see there will never fail. Tell me that you believe in the constancy of my love."

Agnes looked into the clear blue depths of her lover's eyes, saw there truth and enduring love and loyalty, and was comforted. With a swift, beautiful motion she put up her hand, drew down his head, and pushing back his hair, kissed him once upon the forehead. "Yes," she answered, "I know, I believe."

Then she drew away, the suggestion of tears, tears of mingled joy and sorrow in her manner, and the tears sounded in her voice as she entreated, "Go, now, dear sir. I want to be alone."

. . . . . .

When Agnes stooped to receive the crown of her guardian's love, she had not failed to count the cost. And alas for her, poor maid of Marblehead, the cost was all as great as she had counted! In Frankland's lordly home, descriptions of which read like tales of some mythical mansion rather than of what was once a part of our colonial Boston, she lived a prisoner, until Frankland, chafing at the slights and insults put upon her by

the world, carried her off to an Arcadian paradise. Yet even at Hopkinton, then a charming bit of the primeval forest, in the shadow of Wachusett and Monadnock, alone with nature and the man she loved, there were occasional prickings and stingings of the flesh; conscience still whispered accusingly and mutterings from the world penetrated even through the giant box that hedged the Arcadian paradise about. In England, whither she went with Frankland, who was by that time Sir Harry Frankland, baronet, it was no better. At the ancestral home fresh ignominy awaited her.

Indeed, it was not until Sir Harry, that nonpareil of eighteenth-century knighthood, who through all the years of shame and suffering had remained unreproachable in love and loyalty, not until he lifted the crown that stung and in its place put one thornless and nettleless that Agnes attained the happiness which is innocence and lightness of heart.

And the story of her recrowning — does it not read like an elaborately wrought romance? — the earthquake at Lisbon; Frankland's tragic part therein; his rehearsal of his sins as he lay helpless under the engulfing ruins, his judgment on himself for the wrong he had done the woman he loved, and his determination that, should he live, he would right that wrong; Agnes' frantic search through the surging, demolished city for her be-

loved one, her finding and rescuing of him; and as the romantic climax to this most romantic of romances, the marriage of Agnes Surriage to Sir Harry Frankland, baronet? Could Shakespeare himself have done better? Surely the fate that guides our destinies is a mightier dramatist than the mightiest poet, or novelist, or playwright among us.

Fate touched her with its magic wand, and she who had once been the poor fisher-maid of Marblehead underwent a miraculous change and became Lady Frankland, one to wield the sceptre of social dominion, and to make laws and maxims for the fashionable world. In her new character she left the realm of romance and entered the more prosaic, and yet more happy region of every day life. But as a last, significant reminder of that same realm of romance from which she had gone forth, it should be related that Lady Frankland wore her crown, her thornless, nettleless one, with a proud humility that did not forget past martyrdom, and could be kind to all who, like herself, had lost their way and wandered from the straight and narrow path.

V.

THE SERVING OF A LAGGARD LOVER.

A LIGHT breeze fluttered the white curtains at the windows. With only the brass candlesticks on the dressing-table giving light, it was comfortably cool in Hannah Waldo's pretty blue and white boudoir. Nevertheless the young lady of the boudoir plied her fan vigorously. There was anger in its motion, anger too in the quick tapping of her spangled slippers upon the floor, and anger in the flashings of her dark eyes and in the spots of bright color that glowed in her cheeks — restrained, ladylike anger to be sure, but none the less anger.

In Hannah's lap lay a crumpled bit of paper. She had read what was written thereon several times already that day, but that evening she must read again. As she smoothed the crumpled lines and glanced over the now familiar words, a smile that faintly yet unmistakably suggested scorn was on her lips.

Noiselessly, save for the soft rustling of her lutestring gown, she went over to her dressing-table. She held the crumpled bit of paper over the flame of one of her brass candlesticks and, as the paper caught fire from the flame, she tossed it to the floor

and stamped out the blaze with the heel of one of her spangled slippers.

"He shall pay for this," she said under her breath, with a determined tightening of her lips.

"Hannah!" It was Hannah's married sister, Mrs. Isaac Winslow, who spoke. She was standing in the doorway behind Hannah. A light wrap hung loosely on her shoulders. From her flushed, flurried, excited appearance it was evident she had just arrived and in a hurry. "What is this I hear about a postponement of your wedding?" she inquired, advancing into the boudoir. "Isaac came home to dinner to-night with a report of it. 'T is not true, I hope."

Without turning, Hannah busied herself industriously among the jewels on her dressing table in search of a particular ring.

"Yes, 't is true," she answered, with apparent indifference, very much as though her wedding were a matter of like importance with the weather.

"How calmly you take it!" exclaimed her sister, in amazement, seating herself upon the edge of one of the dainty white chairs of the boudoir — Mrs. Winslow never seated herself comfortably when she was excited. "Do you realize, child, that the world will talk more than ever?"

By this time Hannah had found the ring. She slipped it on her finger and, with a steadfast reserve that gave the impression of indifference, she turned and faced her sister.

"I hardly see how that may be," she remarked dryly. "The world has already attended to me and my affairs with an excess of devotion."

Mrs. Winslow shook her head ominously. "My dear, you don't know the world," she observed. "The world never talks so much but that it may talk more."

Hannah shrugged her pretty shoulders as much as to say that the world and what the world said were of small moment to her. "Shall we go down?" she queried, after a pause, putting the snuffer over one of the candles as she spoke. "Isaac came with you, I suppose?"

"Yes," Mrs. Winslow answered, somewhat abstractedly. "I left him downstairs. I myself could not wait. I felt that I must come directly to you."

"'T was kind of you." Hannah spoke in a formal tone, and dropped the snuffer over the other candle.

On the stairway Mrs. Winslow, whose arm was about Hannah's waist, ventured to ask, timorously, for Hannah's reserve half frightened her, "Andrew, of course, has some good cause for the postponement?"

Hannah lifted her head slightly — it may have been in disdain — and answered, "He wrote that circumstances had occurred that made it necessary for him to defer the wedding to a later day." As she spoke it was with a sense of satisfaction that those words had felt the flame of her brass candle-

stick and lay, burnt to a cinder, upon the floor of her boudoir.

The drawing-room toward which Hannah and her sister made their way was brilliantly lighted. All the candles in the sconces and the chandeliers were burning, by their soft radiance touching into lustre the prevailing tints of pink and green in carpet, chairs, and damask wall-hangings.

It looked its best by candle-light, this quietly elegant drawing-room of the Waldo mansion. And it always looked well. There were those who thought it the finest drawing-room in all Boston, not even excepting the drawing-room of His Excellency Governor Shirley. It was so very aristocratic. Scarcely an evening went by that some few of Boston's elect did not come thither to pass a pleasant hour or two in its thoroughly refined, thoroughly high-toned atmosphere.

On this particular evening, the elect few consisted almost exclusively of relatives and intimate friends of the Waldos. In one corner of the room, near the spinet, Isaac Winslow was speaking with young Mrs. Sparhawk, she who had once been Elizabeth Pepperell, the baronet's daughter, sister to Andrew, very like her brother in feature, but unlike him in her smiling, vivacious manner. Not far from them, in the same corner by the spinet, Madame Waldo was engaged in earnest conversation with Stephen Minot, a wealthy merchant of Boston, her husband's relative and close friend.

And in the broad, front window by the card tables, four gentlemen were seated talking. Of these four one was Mr. Sparhawk, of Kittery, he who had married the baronet's daughter. Two others were Will Tyler and Joel Whittemore, nephews of Sir William Pepperell and, consequently, cousins to Andrew, both of them dashing young blades of manhood. The fourth was a trim little gentleman of alert glance and quick gesture, a somewhat remarkable personage, Thomas Flucker, secretary of the province.

Of course every one in the drawing-room was speaking of the same thing, the postponement of Hannah's wedding. Hannah's wedding, sore trial to Hannah's pride and patience, had long been a much talked of matter. It was now nearly five years since the publishment of her engagement to Andrew Pepperell, the baronet's son, a young man of rank and fortune, notably the best "catch" in the province. The Pepperells were all very fond of Hannah, were eager to have her one of their family, and chafed at the length of the engagement. And the young man himself was fond of Hannah. He, too, looked forward with pleasant anticipation to having her enter the family as his wife. But he was in no hurry, he was of the slow sort.

After waiting awhile, the world, a world that loved Hannah, grew angry with Andrew because of his dilatoriness, called him a laggard lover,

ridiculed the fact of his engagement, declared that he would never marry Hannah Waldo. In the face of such talk Hannah's position, needless to say, was a trying one. However, her loyalty to her lover did not once falter. No word of criticism against him ever dared speak itself in her presence.

At length the lover grew more eager. A day was named for the wedding; entertainment was provided; elaborate preparation made. Then the note from the bridegroom-elect to the bride-elect, postponing the day of the wedding, arrived. That note came like a thunderbolt. It shook the world, the Waldo-Pepperell world, to its centre; shook it into a state of perplexed, of indignant amazement.

"This postponement of the wedding is certainly very unfortunate," Mrs. Sparhawk was declaring to Mr. Winslow. "People will talk more than ever now. I cannot understand Andrew's conduct in this. He has probably had another attack of the vapors. You know he has not been well, and his poor health, together with heavy losses of property at sea, has produced a settled state of melancholy. My father has done generously by him, has given him a house and land enough to furnish a very pretty income. Andrew ought to be satisfied. But the poor boy is not himself. Of course not, or he would never behave as he is doing. I cannot understand his being such a laggard. I know that he means only honor in the case, that he will never be happy until he has married Hannah."

Meanwhile Mr. Minot was remarking to Madame Waldo, "Hannah, I presume, is in this instance the same heroine that she always is. All her friends are talking of her dignified and proper behavior throughout her long engagement to Andrew and separation from him and amid the ill-natured comments that the world has passed upon him. If only the young man himself could know fully how gracefully she has conducted herself, I am sure he would be fonder and prouder of her than ever."

And over in the window by the card tables Mr. Sparhawk was observing, "The country, especially the more worthy and better part of it, is quite exasperated at Andrew's conduct. We who are his friends cannot but feel greatly concerned for him. If the matter falls through and he never marries the lady, I very much fear his character will be irretrievably lost."

"And *justly* will his character be lost." It was the trim little gentleman who spoke — Thomas Flucker, he who was secretary of the province. To emphasize the word "justly" he brought down his fist impetuously upon the table. He was a vehement gentleman, and the table fairly quaked beneath his blow. "In my opinion there is no one so mean, so contemptible, as a laggard lover," he asserted.

"But," interposed Mr. Sparhawk, his family pride touched, "Andrew means honorably in the case. He intends to marry Miss Hannah."

"Then why does n't he come forward and claim her?" demanded the vehement little secretary. His round cheeks flushed with emotion, his small black eyes sent forth angry lightnings. "Is he a girl that he must be wooed to the altar? There 's not another man in the province, I 'll wager, who would have held off so long a while, when Miss Hannah was the prize. Six years! I vow, six weeks would have been too long a season of waiting, were I in Mr. Pepperell's shoes."

"If you feel that way, Flucker," suggested young Tyler, slyly, "why not steal Andy's shoes while he is sleeping? They might fit you."

It was at this point in the conversation that Hannah and her sister appeared in the door-way of the drawing-room. Immediately the company ceased talking of Hannah and the postponement of Hannah's wedding. Mrs. Sparhawk seated herself at the spinet and began playing softly, while those about her sat silent, listening. The gentlemen at the card tables rose and went forward to pay their respects to the incoming ladies.

"What great matter were you gentlemen discussing?" Hannah inquired, when with Mr. Flucker and Will Tyler she had drifted away from the rest of the company over to the broad window-seat, near the card tables. "You seemed very much excited about something when I entered."

"Flucker was criticising the way a certain gentleman wears his shoes," Will Tyler retorted gayly.

"I advised him to take the shoes and wear them himself, on the possibility that they might become him better than the other man."

Hannah looked from Will to Mr. Flucker, smiling and apparently unconscious of any hidden meaning in the words. "Why, Will," she exclaimed, "would you make a robber of Mr. Flucker?"

Will laughed. But Mr. Flucker did not laugh; instead, he regarded the girl gravely, more gravely than the conversation appeared to warrant.

"Miss Hannah," he said, "I fear I am something of a robber already. I steal by my thoughts if not by my deeds." There was unmistakable meaning in his words. An embarrassed silence followed them. Then, glancing away from the girl, and smiling to relieve the tension of the moment, he continued, "I am inclined to think that I should have lived in the time of Robin Hood and his robber band. Their code of laws has always appealed to me. To take from those who could spare, to give to those who needed — that was their way. They robbed the undeserving and helped the deserving. A certain rough sort of justice and honor framed their code, a justice and honor with which I sympathize. I, too, should like to rob the undeserving, and take from those who, it seems to me, have forfeited their claim." With sudden boldness the secretary brought his small black eyes to bear upon the girl's downcast face. "I think that a

man may forfeit his claim, do not you, Miss Hannah?"

Hannah lifted her eyes to meet the secretary's bold gaze. "Yes," she answered quickly, determinedly, with a flash of reminiscential anger.

Some moments later Will touched Joel Whittemore upon the shoulder and drew him aside. "Joel," he whispered, "our cousin had best look to his lady if ever he intends marrying her. She and Flucker mean business."

He nodded in the direction of the two figures in the recess of the window. The lattice was flung wide open to the summer night, and Hannah and the secretary were leaning out, gazing starward, with an absorption in each other's presence that seemed wholly oblivious of the rest of the world.

If Will Tyler was right in his surmise, and if Hannah and Mr. Flucker really did mean "business," their business was apparently forgotten in the days that followed. In those days Hannah's approaching marriage to Andrew Pepperell was the only business that manifested itself. Hannah, it seemed, had agreed sweetly, heroically, to the postponement of her wedding. A second day was set, again invitations were sent out, entertainment provided, elaborate preparation made. The world elevated its brows and looked incredulous. "What would be the excuse this time for postponing the Waldo-Pepperell alliance?" it wondered.

Hannah's wedding-day dawned with every prom-

ise of happiness and success. The sky was clear, the air balmy. Within and without the Waldo mansion, things looked their best, with a profound respect for the solemnity of the occasion.

At the appointed hour the guests arrived. They came, a goodly gathering of Boston's and Kittery's finest and best, Waldos and Pepperells in large numbers, and with them the Sewalls, the Chaunceys, the Hirsts, the Sparhawks, the Langdons, the Lears, and the Penhallows.

Most conspicuous among the guests was Hannah's future father-in-law, the renowned baronet, Sir William Pepperell. Very handsome and imposing he was in his gold lace and purple satin, and his new Ramillies wig bought especially for the occasion. He and his wife had driven all the way from Kittery in their chariot to attend the wedding.

Courtly and serene, the baronet mingled among the guests, and smiled his satisfaction in the business of the day. And to Madame Waldo he expressed regret that his good friend General Waldo, her husband, was absent in London at the time. "I wish that he were here," he remarked, "to witness this joyous consummation of our long-cherished hopes."

At length came the moment that was to bring the bride. The guests, assembled in the drawing-room, looked toward the door, waiting and expectant. The minister, immaculate in black coat and white bands, standing in the deep recess of the

SHE DID NOT TAKE THE BRIDEGROOM'S ARM.

window where the ceremony was to be performed, looked toward the door, waiting and expectant. And the bridegroom, a tall, slender gentleman very fine in his suit of fawn-colored satin, his Mechlin lace ruffles and his diamond buckles, with an anticipatory smile upon his pale, serious, Hamlet-like face, from his station by the door looked toward the stairs, waiting and expectant.

Down the stairs and along the hall, attended by her bridesmaids, came Hannah and stood in the door-way. She was all in white and beautiful beneath her bridal veil, not pale like the bridegroom, but flushed and radiant, and her eyes were dark, darker than usual it seemed, and very bright.

She did not take the bridegroom's arm, as by rights she should have done. Instead she drew away from him a step, and looked him up and down, over all his magnificence of satin, lace, and diamond buckles with a cool, distant stare.

Then she turned to the company, smiling ironically, whimsically. "My friends," she said in a clear voice, quiet and composed, "I fear I must disappoint you. You have come expecting a wedding, but there will be no wedding." Again she regarded the bridegroom with that cool, distant stare. "I have decided," she continued, "that Mr. Pepperell has not that love and friendship for me which is necessary to make me happy as his wife. Therefore I will not marry him."

Nothing could have been simpler, more free from melodrama, yet more determined than the way in which she spoke the ominous words. With quickly brightening glance she turned again to the company. "But this must not interfere with your pleasure this afternoon, my friends," she declared. "There will be no wedding, but just as though there were a wedding, there will be music and dancing. Let the merry-making begin at once. Pray choose your partners for the minuet."

One moment she dropped her eyes to the floor, the next she had lifted them to look, not at the tall, handsome bridegroom on her left, whose paleness had become a pallor, but instead at a trim little gentleman on her right, whose small black eyes were waiting for her look.

"Mr. Flucker," she said with dignity and with great friendliness as well, "I believe I promised my hand to you for the minuet, did I not? It is ready for you now" — she extended her hand. "Will you not lead me forth to the dance?"

. . . . . .

Sir William and his lady, it is said, returned home from what was to have been their son's wedding, sadly disappointed. The other guests of that wedding that was no wedding, went away, knowing not whether to be sorry or pleased. From London General Waldo wrote to his old friend Sir William Pepperell, expressing his regret at his daughter's change of mind. The bridegroom said nothing.

Like Hamlet, however, whom he resembled, he probably thought and suffered a great deal.

The world elevated its brows and smiled. Miss Hannah Waldo, it decided, was a very clever young woman.

And the world was to elevate its brows still higher and smile more broadly. Miss Hannah Waldo had had her revenge. She was also to have her consolation. Less than six weeks after that dramatic severing of the Waldo-Pepperell alliance, the rejected bridegroom, languishing in his Kittery mansion, received a brief but pithy message from his Boston cousin, Will Tyler. "I have to inform you," wrote the waggish Will, "that last Monday evening Miss Hannah Waldo, brought in her chariot, appeared a bride at the West Church, New Boston, and was married to Mr. Flucker."

VI.

THE WOOING OF A GOVERNOR.

Governor Benning Wentworth was alone in his Council Chamber. The members of his Council, after a long and tedious meeting, had withdrawn. Business was done for the day. In the quiet of the twilight hour, the Governor sat in his easy-chair by the window, the broad eastern window that looked out upon Little Harbor, and smoked his long pipe, and tried to fancy that he was happy.

He had much to make him happy, he reminded himself. He was the greatest man in New Hampshire, governor of the province. Things went very much as he directed — laws were made and unmade, lands granted, offenders punished, according to his decree. People smirked and salaamed before him. He rode in a chariot and was served by slaves. And his house, that stood a short distance out of the town of Portsmouth, a sequestered, stately, noble sort of pile, was a palace in the primitive fashion of the day and land.

Recounting to himself his benefits, and puffing at his pipe with an assumption of content, the Governor looked about him. His glance travelled round his Council Chamber from carved mantel to

oaken floor, from painted panel and rich tapestry to the broad fireplace where stout logs blazed and roared; and having left the Council Chamber his glance went further, through doors that opened upon the billiard room, where were visible the table and, to one side, a buffet on which punch-bowl, tankards, and glass goblets were set forth; and going yet further, his glance reached through other doors showing vistas of other rooms where, on festive occasions, cards and games of many sorts were played.

His glance having noted all these things, symbols of magnificence and pleasure, came back to his fireplace and the empty chairs about him, came back drearily, missing something. This place was his house, his palace, he remarked to himself. But was it home? he queried. Could any place be home to a man who was a widower and childless? Nay, he reflected, wanting wife and children his house in spite of its magnificence was cheerless, and wanting wife and children his life in spite of its elevation and its honors was cheerless too, as cheerless, he told himself, as the scene without his window — a scene of bare trees and frosted lawns reaching down to a gray sea.

The Governor's mood as he arrived at this conclusion was not one of sentiment. The Governor was not a sentimental man. His face, florid and genial, his portly person, and his general air of easy dignity and graciousness showed him to be, what

in truth he was, a man completely given to the material things of life. He governed practically, shrewdly, with an eye to the province's purse and his own as well. He lived high, sleeping, eating, drinking, smoking to his fill. He loved his snuff-boxes and his bowls, his cards, his hunting, and his racing. And he had loved his wife and his children, not merely as he loved these other things of course, yet with a difference of degree rather than of kind. His wife had been much dearer to him than his cards, but he had expended no more sentiment upon her than he expended upon them. And he missed her, according to his nature, with no great constancy of affection or sorrow in his loss of her, but with the wish that she might have continued with him to give the needed touch of cheeriness, of comfort, of home to his surroundings.

It was with this wish at his heart, and with the added wish that his sons too might have been spared to him to make enjoyable the last years of his life, that the Governor gazed sadly out of his Council Chamber window. The winter scene without reminded him of his own winter, of the frosty locks that a wig could hide but not rejuvenate, and of those sixty years or more, the weight of which was heavy upon him. The Governor drew a sigh, meditating that he was indeed getting to be an old man, that he had been a widower for a long while, and that if he wished to derive any further pleasure from life before he died, such pleasure as love and

matrimony might confer, 't was time he went about it.

It must not be supposed, however, because the Governor was a widower of many years' standing, that he was such without ever having made an attempt to change his condition. Rumor told an amusing but not wholly creditable tale about a matrimonial endeavor of his. When his widower's weeds had not long been withered, it was whispered, the Governor's fancy had been captured by a certain Mistress Molly Pitman, and to the maiden he had offered himself, his riches, and his honors. But Molly, who was a maiden with more of sentiment than of worldliness about her, had preferred one Master Shortridge, a mechanic. Thereupon the Governor, with a stroke of playful humor and of deviltry as well, had kidnapped the mechanic, and sent him off to serve in foreign ports. But fate, with a playfulness and deviltry to outrival the Governor's, restored the lovers to each other. And the Governor was left a widower to await the pleasure of some less romantic maiden than Mistress Molly Pitman.

It was with the remembrance of Molly Pitman, rankling like a thorn in his flesh no doubt, that the Governor started suddenly, somewhat indignantly from his chair, and going over to a tall pier-glass that was in a further corner of the room, stood before it, surveying himself critically. The sight of his imposing figure, resplendent in purple and

gold, and radiant with the glory of diamond clasps and silver buckles, impressed him favorably and he was satisfied.

"Surely I may find favor in a woman's eyes," he told himself; and unconsciously, so absorbed was he, so very much in earnest, he spoke aloud.

"Your Excellency hath spoken truly," said a voice behind him, a voice in which reverence and impudence most charmingly united.

The Governor turned in the direction of the voice. "Martha," he said, surprised, abashed, reproving, and yet pleased.

Martha was standing in the doorway that led into the hall. The portraits of the ancestral Wentworths were above her, and about her was the oaken, carved, conventional magnificence of the colonial palace. But Martha stood unawed, unafraid, a wayward sunbeam that had dared to penetrate through the gloom into the innermost sanctum of the palace. A branch of candles was in her hand, bringing brightness into the room, and lighting into radiance her own fair, gypsy-like face.

"I thought perchance your Excellency might wish for lights," she observed, coming forward and setting down the branch of candles on a table near to where the Governor was standing. "It grows dark early these winter afternoons." She turned upon the Governor a glance demure, yet smiling, that seemed to say that she would keep her place

and at the same time would enjoy a joke even at his Excellency's expense.

"You are a thoughtful girl, Martha," remarked the Governor, approvingly. "But for you, in spite of slaves and servants, I should fare poorly in my own house."

"I but do my duty, sir," she answered, lowering her eyes and moving toward the door. For all her sweet humility there was an air of cunning and audacity about her. She was certainly a most contradictory, inconsistent, wondrous bit of femininity, and would have interested a more fastidious man than Governor Benning Wentworth.

"Martha," called the Governor, when she had reached the threshold. He had drawn his chair to the table where she had placed the branch of candles and sat there, his hands folded upon the table, regarding her with the pleased expression that she so often woke in his face. "How long have you been in my service, Martha?" he inquired.

"Seven years," she answered.

"Seven years," he repeated after her. "That is a long time, Martha, for one who is young like you." He spoke meditatively, and continued to regard her with the pleased expression. "And all that while you have served me well," he continued. "You have been careful of my comforts, quick to do my bidding, and slow to ask favors of me. You have been a good girl, Martha, and now what

reward do you ask for your seven years of service?" he inquired. "You yourself shall name the reward, and with pleasure I will grant it."

A light flashed in the girl's face. She advanced toward the Governor several steps. "I am to name the reward and your Excellency will grant whatever I ask?" she questioned quickly, eagerly.

The Governor nodded, smiling at her impetuosity. He guessed that she would ask of him some girlish trifle — a ribbon, a trinket, or perchance a gown.

But here he misjudged the daring maiden before him. Martha Hilton was not one to stop at a ribbon, a trinket, or a gown. Her ambitions reached higher than trifles. Her ambitions would make of her a lady, would have her ride in a chariot, would put a title before her name, would have her go gowned in brocaded satin, her hair dressed over a towering cushion, red heels upon her slippers.

Martha's ambitions were with her always. They rose with her in the morning, ate with her, worked with her through the day, found their way into her prayers and lay down with her at night. Indeed, they must have been born with her. Seven years before the time of this scene in the Governor's Council Chamber, when Martha was just a mere slip of a girl, they were as omnipresent as at this later date when the bloom of her twentieth summer was upon her. When naught but a scrub girl, bare-

footed, bare-shouldered, and with dishevelled hair, fetching water from the town pump and splashing her bare feet with the drops that fell from her pail, the light of reckless, impudent, merry childhood dancing in her eyes, her shoeless, decolleté condition had scandalized a proper dame, Mistress Stavers, hostess of the Earl of Halifax Inn. Dame Stavers standing in the doorway of her tavern, beholding Martha as she passed, had remonstrated, exclaiming, "You Pat, you Pat, how dare you go looking so?" But Martha, who, in spite of bare feet and shoulderless gown, already dreamed of future glory had tossed her head pertly and proudly, retorting, "No matter how I look now, madam, I shall yet ride in my chariot." Martha a child, it may be seen, was ambitious as well as Martha a woman.

Martha's ambitions, together with a tact, a cleverness, a daring all as inborn as her ambitions, had already lifted her several rounds up the ladder of success. For seven years she had served the Governor and in that time had not failed in her duty to him, had grown practised, skilled in household arts, and wise in the knowledge of her master's likes and dislikes. She had won her master's approval and his praises. She was first among his servants, next himself in importance in his household. Was it surprising, considering how she had progressed, that she should be daring to raise her eyes still higher, even to the eminence of the Governor himself?

To Martha herself it was not at all surprising that she should so dare. She knew that a marriage between the Governor and herself would not be the first marriage between high and low. She may not have been familiar with the story of King Cophetua and the beggar maid, but other stories, similar to that classic one, were happening all about her. The shifting society of the colonial day, its romantic, adventurous character, made marriages between high and low a not unusual occurrence, and in daring to lift her eyes to the Governor, Martha was not without precedent.

"Your Excellency will grant whatever I ask?" again she queried. Her eyes were very bright and the color came and went in her cheeks; but she was self-possessed with the self-possession that comes always to brave spirits in moments of great crisis.

Again the Governor nodded, smiling. He noted the girl's bright eyes and changing color, but only to reflect that this maid-servant of his was fair, fairer indeed, he thought, than those high-stepping, aristocratic dames who thronged his card rooms, reception rooms, and ball rooms on occasions of festivity.

Martha courtesied low before the Governor. Then she rose slowly and stood erect before him, turning upon him a glance quick, determined, and intrepid, yet shy withal and coquettishly appealing.

"I ask no less a boon than your Excellency's self," she said.

Her words brought the Governor to his feet. "Hoity, toity!" he exclaimed, but his tone was one of surprise rather than of displeasure. It might be that his maid-servant was presumptuous, yet truly she was presumptuous in a very agreeable, charming sort of way. She flattered his vanity, she tickled his sense of humor.

The Governor played first with his ruffles and then with his watch-chain, surveying Martha all the while with an amused smile.

"So you would be Governor's Lady?" he inquired.

"Yes," she answered, her eyes smiling with his eyes, her head held very high and proud.

"Gad!" exclaimed the Governor, admiration in his glance; "I don't doubt but that you would make a good one."

"Would I not, though!" exclaimed Martha, her voice rippling with laughter, her eyes dancing enthusiastically at the prospect. "Do you not think a train gown and rings upon my fingers would become me?" She swished an imaginary train, as she spoke, and held out her fingers to show imaginary rings. "Who knows your house so well as I?" she demanded with pretty sauciness; "and who knows you so well? And could I not order the servants about royally?" Her eyes flashed with promises of despotism. "And could I not act the grand lady to perfection?" She smiled and folded her hands and elevated her chin

after the manner of grand ladies. The dramatic artist, that was a large part of Martha, rose nobly to the occasion. Martha played to the Governor as she had never played to any one before. There was genius in her every motion.

The Governor proved a most appreciative audience. He laughed and applauded, and at the end pronounced the verdict, "Martha, you have not your match in the province."

Again Martha courtesied. "Saving only your Excellency," she said, and her manner was that mingling of reverence and impudence characteristic of her and very pleasing to the Governor.

"And is my boon to be granted?" she demanded.

"If thou wilt woo me with a kiss, thou shalt have me — Lady Wentworth," he answered.

. . . . . .

Had the little god with the quiver and the arrows tried to make a third with Martha and the Governor, he must have withdrawn from their company abashed. Such boldness on her part, such levity on his, was not at all according to the code of the little god.

But if love was missing from the union, at least each got what he and she desired — the Governor his domestic comfort, and Martha her coach and brocaded gown, her red-heeled slippers, and servants to obey her beck and call, all that magnificence and power, indeed, of which she had dreamed.

Martha and the Governor lived their lives

THE GOVERNOR PROVED A MOST APPRECIATIVE AUDIENCE.

according to their lights, somewhat glaring, and after a fashion of their own, somewhat worldly. Whatever their faults, however, they certainly were not prosaic. And so, Romance found them and, with an indulgent smile, enrolled them in the list of her immortals.

VII.

THE PASSING OF A SWEETHEART.

"I BELIEVE that is all, gentlemen." As he spoke, Dr. Benjamin Rush rose and pushed back his chair. Save for an expression of weariness about the eyes, he was his usual cheerful, urbane self. "The case in question was a very particular case," he said. "I felt the need of other opinion than my own. I thank you for the interest you have taken. What you say only confirms what I myself had feared. The case is hopeless."

He went over to the window of his lodgings and looked out across a vista of brick walls, roofs, and city gardens to a glimpse of green country land indistinct in the distance. His eyes could not see the vine-clad farmhouse that was somewhere there, but his imagination gave it form with all the clearness of reality.

The other gentlemen, all friends of his as well as fellow-workers, thought that they read in his expression, one of abstraction and remoteness, a wish to be alone. They did not stop to discuss with him Dr. Redman's lecture at the Medical College of the night before, nor to retail any professional gossip as, under ordinary circumstances,

they might have done. They moved towards the door, their three-cornered hats beneath their arms.

Dr. Rush bowed them out with his usual courtesy; but when Dr. James, his old-time chum and classmate, would have made his departure with the rest, he called him back.

"James," he remarked to the young man who stood before him, looking a sympathy he could not express, "to what good were we created, we doctors? My wise-looking medical volumes, my black bottles arrayed in deadly ranks upon the shelves, my diploma from the College of Edinburgh, with its bold flourishes and dazzling seal, hung in such prominence upon the wall, they all mock me." He spoke in a tone of light irony, pointing to the objects as he named them. A smile brightened his serious face, but quickly vanished and was succeeded by an expression of more intense seriousness than before.

James went up to him and grasped his hand. "You should not speak so, Rush," he protested. "You have done great good in the world already, and you will do even greater."

The doctor shook his head. "Our power fails us when we most need it," he declared. And then, in a tone of deep earnestness and feeling, from which all lightness had passed, "We have just now condemned to death the purest of souls and the sweetest of women," he said.

James met the doctor's sorrowing eyes with a

look of understanding and compassion. "I feared that 't was Mistress Eve," he said.

"Yes," answered the doctor, simply, and returned gratefully his old chum's eloquent pressure of the hand.

The doctor's servant, coming into the room a few moments later, found him alone, seated at his desk, his head resting in his hands. As the man entered, the doctor roused himself with a half start. "My hat and cane, if you please," he ordered shortly, "and if any one should call, I will not be back till evening."

Leaving his lodgings, Dr. Rush passed out into a world of warm summer sunshine, of talkativeness and fashion. It was that hour of the afternoon when the belles and beaux of Philadelphia turned out to promenade along High street, what is now Market street, the old-time mall of the Quaker city, there to observe the latest styles, to display to best advantage their own dazzling costumes, and to exchange salutations, greetings, and bits of news and gossip, with the rest of the social world.

Dr. Rush was not in the mood to enjoy the brightness and the merry-making. The sunshine blinded him, and the talk and laughter jarred upon his ear. Nevertheless, he must play his part in the brilliant panorama. His position in the world of fashion demanded that he should.

Already, on that summer afternoon of the year 1773, Dr. Benjamin Rush was something of a social

star. Not that he was a macaroni. Indeed, his dress was of the simplest. But he was a man of education, culture, and refinement; of a ready wit and considerable charm of manner. Though not yet thirty, he had established a reputation for himself as a man of letters and a physician of distinguished ability. Moreover, he had travelled and studied in foreign lands. The aroma of the Old World was about him. And altogether he was a most desirable sort of person, a young man deemed worthy of the patronage of Philadelphia's élite.

Therefore, as he took his way along High street, he must stop to bow profoundly before numerous smiling, courtesying dames, and to shake hands and take snuff with this and that gentleman of his acquaintance. Now and then a very fine painted chair or coach came to a halt at sight of him and he was summoned by a gracious wave of glittering fan or flutter of lace handkerchief to pay his respects at my lady's chariot window. With a gently drawn sigh and a languid glance from under long lashes, he was assured that my lady was well, quite well. There was of course the inevitable *migraine*, but that was only to be expected when the weather continued so warm and sultry. Surely there must be magic in the doctor's powders. They had restored her mamma and herself to health and happiness. And how was Dr. Rush? She did not find him in his usual looks. Had he been ill that his friends had seen him so seldom of late? or was this

sudden withdrawal of his from the world all because of a certain fair Eve of his acquaintance? She would not deny she had heard rumors. Ah, it was true, then! Another man subjected to the despotism of the petticoat! Well, she congratulated him upon his subjugation and was glad to hear he had so sweet a mistress.

Dr. Rush watched the departing chariot with a whimsical sort of smile. There had been a time when such condescension from the quality had gratified him mightily. But now — now he had discovered pleasure of a better sort.

He left the mall and its gay, glittering throng behind him and sought the quiet, shadowy streets of the city. For a while his way led him beneath rows of oaks and chestnuts, great towering trees that might have been remnants of the primeval forest, past modest dwellings of red brick and white wood with trim little gardens attached. Here a comfortable cool prevailed and the air wafted over the garden walls was sweet with the scent of roses and honeysuckle. The brightness and merry-making of High street had wearied him, and here, in this atmosphere of calm retirement, a restlessness possessed him. The primeval trees, the modest dwellings, the trim gardens with their sweet scents all seemed to be breathing a spirit of patience and content with which he could not feel in harmony.

After a time, however, the quiet, shadowy

streets came to an end. He was getting beyond the city limits into the fields and marshes of the Northern Liberties. Before him, in the midst of open, uncleared spaces, rose a long range of brick buildings which he recognized as the British barracks. Here the doctor found himself in a scene of noisy confusion. At first he was perplexed to know the cause of the excitement, but presently he remembered that there was to be a review of the troops on the parade ground that afternoon which the populace was invited to attend.

The review was evidently at an end, and the region about the barracks was overrun with a jostling, elbowing, homeward-bound crowd. In such a company, courtesy was pushed to the wall. The doctor took refuge in a doorway and waited.

As he stood there surveying the hurly-burly scene with an amused sort of indulgence, he noted in the crowd a young girl who seemed to be getting more than her share of the jostling and elbowing. She was of slender, delicate physique, but the excitement of the moment, or indignation at the rudeness of her neighbors, had brought a bright color to her cheeks, and her red hair beneath her trig little bonnet flashed in the sunlight like a crown of burnished gold. "How well she looks!" thought the doctor, and for the moment he experienced an awakening of hope. The physician was lost in the lover.

The girl was unconscious of the doctor's fixed

gaze. She was looking straight before her with an air of studied dignity and self-poise that assumed a complete indifference to the company about her. To one who knew her, however, discomfiture was manifest in the downward droop of her mouth and the wide, troubled expression of her eyes. And when, at length, a great hulking fellow in military costume brushed against her and addressed her in terms of half-tipsy gallantry, her courage wavered. Her lip quivered just the slightest, and she looked about her with a childlike piteousness of appeal.

A firm, steadying hand was placed beneath her arm and a strong voice spoke in her ear, "Well, Sally, is it not time you put yourself under somebody's protection?"

The girl turned quickly in the direction of the voice, her whole face lighting with a surprised and pleased relief. "Oh, Dr. Rush," she exclaimed, "I am very glad to see you. 'T was exceedingly mortifying to find myself all alone in this tumult."

"And how, may I ask, came you to venture out all alone in this tumult?" inquired the doctor, with an attempt at sternness, and then, with a softening of tone, "Is it kind to me, Sally, not to take better care of yourself?"

"Pray do not scold," entreated Sally, gently. "'t was not my fault. Remember the old copy in the copy books and 'be not overhasty to judge.'"

The happy laughing light in her eyes would have routed a more serious reproof than the doctor's.

He smiled, trying to catch a little of her quiet gayety, yet feeling every moment more keenly the pain of the knowledge that he bore. "'T was the haste of love that prompted me," he said.

"Yes, I know," interposed Sally, quickly, and a joyous ring in her voice answered the ardor of his tone. "But let me explain. In the first place I did not 'venture out alone,' but with a company of friends. We came to see the general review;" and then with an inquiring look, "I suppose you did too."

The doctor ruminated. "I did not know just why I came; but now I know 't was to see you," he concluded, with an air of proud triumph.

Sally laughed happily. "And to save my respect," she added; "I am very grateful. Really 't was most humiliating to discover that I had lost my friends in some way, and that I was alone on the Common surrounded by people of all ranks and denominations, and without a gentleman to protect me," and she shook her head slowly and sadly over the seriousness of her recent dilemma.

"You admit, then, a gentleman is somewhat necessary to a lady's happiness?" The doctor spoke in a tone of light raillery. He was doing very well, he told himself; but all the while he felt like a man in a play acting a part with which he was not quite familiar.

Sally surveyed him with a look that might have been saucy had it not been for the unfailing sweet-

ness of her countenance. "Only because of custom," she retorted, "not for any real service that he does her. 'T was pride, not fear, that discomposed me a few moments ago. I was ashamed to think that some one I knew might see me and recognize me all alone in this tumult. Now, when I am with you, I hold up my head and do not care whom I meet. And all because of custom!" She spoke with playful irony as one who saw the foolishness of such a custom, but must of necessity conform to it. Then, with an upward glance at the doctor and a smile that contradicted her words, "If 't were not for custom," she added, "and if 't were deemed proper for a maid to walk alone upon the crowded streets, I might not be leaning so docilely upon your arm."

The doctor drew a long sigh. "Then thank God for custom!" he ejaculated emphatically.

He looked with lingering tenderness into the face upturned to his. It was a face of rare beauty, a beauty of expression rather than of physical perfection, a changeful face, the color coming and going, the eyes darkening and lighting with each fresh-coming thought and fancy. There was about it, as about Sally herself, an individual sweetness and winsomeness. Sally was different from those grand dames who had smiled upon him from chariot windows, as the meadow-blown rose was different from its carefully nurtured sisters of the hothouse, so the doctor determined. Hers was the

freshness, the originality, the purity like that which comes with the dew of the morning and the breath of the open country.

Just now the face she raised to his was eloquent with the gladness of loving and being loved. There was something infectious about such gladness. A glimmer of its spirit fell upon the doctor. "She is happy," he thought. "May not I forget for the moment and be happy with her? The present is ours to live and enjoy." And with the reflection, there came comfort and a certain shadowy sort of happiness.

They had passed through the crowd almost without realizing it. A country road stretched before them, a country road that has since changed its aspect and become the scene of city sights and city noises. Then, when Sally and the doctor knew it, wild flowers grew along its edge and its circuitous course led past duck pond, whortleberry marsh, and hay-field.

The sun was near to setting when Sally and the doctor turned into the road. A ruddy splendor glowed on the western moorland and lingered about the hay-stacks and in the quiet pools where yellow water-lilies bloomed. The lowing of the cattle and the good-night twitter of the birds announced the close of day.

A ploughman in field regimentals returning from his day's work, his dog following at his heels, came toward them down the long, shaded vista of the

road. As he passed, the doctor raised his hat and nodded. "I hope I see you well, sir," he said courteously. The man was one of his unpaying patients.

Sally looked up into the doctor's face and smiled. "Do you know why I love you — one reason?" she inquired.

"I have often wondered," mused the doctor, half jestingly, half seriously.

"'T is because of your big soul," she declared. "Your cordial greeting knows no distinction between your wealthiest patron and your poorest charity patient."

"The poor are my best patients," he rejoined; "God is their paymaster."

Sally's praise was sweet to the doctor, and yet it brought with it a sense of future loss that changed this sweet to bitter. For the moment he could not see her because of the sudden dimness in his eyes.

He looked away to the western horizon. The sun had set, but an afterglow still lingered in the sky. He read a sadness in the dying colors. They told of change, of perishableness, of death.

"It has been a fine day," he said. To himself it seemed as though he spoke of a lost friend.

"A fine day," Sally responded, and the carelessness of her tone contrasted strangely with the doctor's sorrowing mood, "but not an uncommon day. Therefore in a week or so I dare say 't will be entirely forgotten."

The doctor smiled faintly. There was often in Sally's conversation, as now, a light cynicism of a very girlish sort, more feigned than real. It added to her originality and piquancy and it amused the doctor. Just now, however, it jarred a little. It was not in sympathy with his thoughts.

"'T is the same with the weather and mankind," continued Sally, unconscious of the irony of her words and of their effect upon the doctor. "Only the extreme in both is remembered. I often think it a great ingratitude that the commonplace good and wise folks are forgotten, while others not so good and wise have their names handed down to posterity because this one or that one has been accounted the best hairdresser or the best fiddle-maker of his time."

The doctor laughed in spite of himself. "Curiosity 's another name for man," he rejoined, quoting from Thomas Godfrey, a popular young poet of the day:

> "'The blazing meteor streaming thro' the air
> Commands our wonder and admiring eyes.
> With eager gaze we trace the lucent paths,
> Till, spent at last, it strikes to native nothing;
> While the bright stars which ever steady glow,
> Unheeded shine and bless the world below.'

"Which would you rather be, Sally, the blazing meteor or the bright unheeded star?"

Sally smiled, a quiet contented sort of smile. "There is little of the meteor character in my

composition," she said. "You will have to do the blazing for both of us, I fear."

Her eyes sought the western horizon. There, above the last rose flush, a star shone pale and solitary, and with a beckoning light. "Look!" she said, directing the doctor's gaze to it. "There I am — or there I will be — for when I die my soul shall find some little star like that, and there watch over the world — and you."

The little star blurred before the doctor's eyes, and his heart throbbed with the pain that Sally's words conveyed. But Sally was unconscious of his suffering. She spoke as one to whom death was as yet a far-off thing, vague and untangible.

Realizing this, and wishing to keep the knowledge of her fate from her as long as possible, the doctor made a supreme effort for self-control, and then remarked with careful carelessness, "You forget, Sally, long before your advent as a star, in my character of blazing meteor I shall probably have 'struck to native nothing.'"

Sally's brow clouded, but cleared almost instantly in a bright smile. "You shall not be a blazing meteor," she said. "We will find something better," and she studiously searched the great glimmer of the sky for a heavenly body worthy of her lover. True love knows no proportions.

Sally's contemplation of heavenly bodies, however, was very soon interrupted by things more close at hand. They had come to the dark, flow-

ing waters of "Coxon's Creek," and as they crossed the rude wooden bridge that arched it, there before them stood the little vineclad farmhouse that was Sally's home. Lights were shining in the windows, the scent of clover and of new-mown hay was in the air, and from the orchard near by a song sparrow, sweetest of summer warblers, was pouring forth his evening voluntary. The spirit of a cheery and domestic calm breathed about the place.

Sally turned at the gate, as though to say good-night. But the doctor would not let her go from his sight. "I may come in and drink tea with you?" he pleaded.

Sally regarded him in pleased surprise. "I had thought you were too busy," she explained.

"And may not a doctor have a holiday now and then as well as other men?" he protested, as they walked up the path together, hand in hand.

Sally's home was a simple, unpretentious little farmhouse, but none the less there was an air of quiet elegance about it. At one time Sally's father, who was a sea-captain, had been a prosperous gentleman. He and his family had lived "in very comfortable circumstances," so it is reported, "in a large stone house," in the most aristocratic quarter of the Quaker capital. His children had received a fine education and had "moved in Phildelphia best society." It was only recently that the Captain had met with reverses and withdrawn to the farm. The farm was being run by Mrs. Eve,

Sally, and the younger boys. Captain Eve and his two elder sons were away on a long cruise to the West Indies. But, though the Eves had lost their fortune, they had not lost their culture and refinement and the good taste that can transform even a simple and unpretentious little farmhouse into a pleasant, attractive home.

Mrs. Eve and the boys — Sally's brothers — were already at their tea-drinking, when Sally and the doctor entered. The room was bright with a soft candle-light. Steam issued from the generous china tea-pot over which Mrs. Eve presided, and the aroma of the favorite colonial beverage filled the air.

Sally would have played hostess and waited on the doctor, but he insisted that she sit down and passed her tea to her and saw that she was served before he himself would touch a mouthful. "She is tired," he explained to her mother. "She has been disobeying doctor's orders again and running away. I have with difficulty brought her back."

Mrs. Eve, a sweet-faced woman of Quaker antecedents, regarded Sally anxiously. "Thee looks tired, child," she said, and then turning to the boys, "Joseph, pour out some cordial for thy sister, and William, thee had best close the window there behind her; there is a dampness in the evening air."

Sally laughed at the fuss that was being made about her. "One would think I were an invalid," she protested.

SALLY BEGAN RUNNING HER FINGERS GENTLY OVER THE KEYS.

When tea was finished and cleared away, the boys went out to do some last things about the farm, Mrs. Eve seated herself beside the table and the candle-light with her knitting, and Sally and the doctor went over to Sally's little spinet.

Sally began running her fingers gently over the keys, and the doctor sat beside her, listening to her playing with half-closed eyes. What a fair sight this was before him — the candle-lit room, the books upon the shelves, the pictures on the wall, Mrs. Eve beside the table with her knitting, and the dear girl at the spinet! And how terrible the thought that this fair sight must so soon be marred!

What were the words Sally's sweet voice was singing?

"'My true love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for another given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss;
There never was a better bargain driven;
My true love hath my heart and I have his.

"'His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart for once it was his own,
I cherish his because in me it bides;
My true love hath my heart and I have his.'"

Sally ended and looked at the doctor, a soft light shining in her eyes. Her hands went out to his and his lips touched her forehead.

"That song was writ for you and me, Sally," he whispered.

"Yes," she answered, "Sir Philip Sydney wrote it for us two hundred years ago."

A moment later they turned to Mrs. Eve at the table. "I will join you with my knitting, mother," Sally said, "and the doctor shall read to us."

She went immediately to get her knitting and, when she was gone, the doctor walked over to the table slowly but resolutely. He stood beside it, looking down at Mrs. Eve. The weary expression was in his eyes and something like compassion too.

"How has Sally seemed to you of late?" he asked, rather abruptly.

Mrs. Eve was counting her stitches. She waited to finish her count, and then answered, without raising her eyes, "A little tired and listless, but she has complained of no pain since the last attack. I think that she is better."

The doctor's lips tightened, and when he spoke, it was with a great effort.

"'T is hard to be a doctor and see the future," he said.

Mrs. Eve looked up quickly, apprehensively, from her knitting. His expression even more than his words alarmed her. "Thee does not mean — thee does not fear —" she faltered.

The doctor answered with sad eyes and with a lowering of his head. His hand went out across

the table to hers and held it, for a moment, in a firm, steadying clasp. Then, "Sally is coming back," he said in warning tones under his breath.

Sally entered with a light, free-and-easy step, her work-bag swinging on her arm. "You look like a pair of conspirators," she commented gayly, sitting down beside the table and taking her knitting from her bag.

Her needles began to click industriously. There was something very beautiful in her sweet unconsciousness, her childlike absence of all suspicion. "I hope you have decided what you are going to read to us, *professor?*"

She spoke the last word with an amused pucker of the lips and a sly glance over at the doctor; ever since the doctor had been made a professor of the Medical College of Philadelphia, along with other older and more experienced physicians, his title had been a joke with Sally and a matter of pride as well.

The doctor smiled at the word. He, too, had taken a seat beside the table, and at Sally's question he began looking over the books ranged before him.

"'T is for you ladies to decide," he said. "Here is an interesting array: 'The Adventures of the Renowned Don Quixote,' Cumberland's 'Fashionable Lover,' a prodigious fine comedy, I understand, did you not say so, Sally? Godfrey's poems, several familiar-looking little volumes with

Shakspere's name upon the cover, and last but not least 'Poor Richard's Almanac' an — excellent variety. Which will you choose?"

"Mother will say the 'Almanac,' by all means," declared Sally. "She thinks that a most wonderful production and was much shocked the other day when I boasted that I could publish one as good, did I but take it into my head to set down the exact time of the rising and setting of the sun every day, the southing of the moon, and how often the wind changed, adding to this tally a collection of some few recipes, old sayings, and scraps of poetry. I really think I shall have to bring out a 'Poor Sally's Almanac' some day, if only to prove to my mother that she overestimates 'Poor Richard' and underestimates her own daughter. Why do you look at me so queerly, mother? Am I becoming too saucy, too impudent?" And Sally's eyes gazed into her mother's questioningly, teasingly, fondly.

Mrs. Eve's eyes dropped to her knitting, and the faint glimmer of a smile lighted her gentle face. "I know thee loves well to plague thy mother, Sally, because of her liking for 'Poor Richard,'" she said.

Dr. Rush glanced at Mrs. Eve admiringly. He blessed that calmness, that quiet courage that was her heritage from a long line of Quaker ancestors. She would help him, he reflected, to keep from Sally the knowledge of her fate.

But he realized how hard it must be for Mrs. Eve just now, with that same knowledge fresh upon her, to meet Sally's merry banter. He wished to save her as much as possible. "Sally," he interposed, "for shame, to tease your mother so! Wait, I will turn your mocking laughter to tears by reading to you from the sad story of 'Romeo and Juliet.'"

"Romeo and Juliet" was the poem of Shakspere's that Sally and the doctor had read oftenest together. The sufferings of those ill-starred lovers were very interesting to them in their happy, hopeful love. The little worn volume, which in the days of its newness had been a present from him to her, had gone with them on many of their wanderings to the shadowy retreats and secret corners of the farm, and the mayflowers, gathered in early spring and pressed between the leaves, which now looked out at him, shedding a perfume as sweet and sad as the memory of a hope departed, reminded him of the time, not very long ago, when Sally had been well and strong and when, in his thoughts of the future and of her, he had not yet travelled to the valley of the shadow.

That night, in the candle-lit room, conscious always of the nearness of that mysterious valley, he read a new meaning in the immortal lines. For the first time he realized the pathos of the last parting of the lovers, the cruelty of their divided fates which death only could unite.

During the reading — it was a reading of favorite passages, of course time would not permit a reading of the whole poem — Mrs. Eve slipped away. The doctor wondered in which of the rooms above she was sitting by herself, learning to face her sorrow.

He was alone with Sally. He looked across to where she sat, and felt, more keenly than ever before, how inexpressibly sweet was the charm of her presence and her sympathy. As he read the poet's beautiful thoughts, he watched their reflections in her face and he found the reflections more beautiful than the thoughts themselves.

When he had finished, Sally looked up with tears in her eyes. "You have read it wonderfully," she said. And when he made a move to go, she quoted smilingly, "'Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day.'"

She went with him to the door to say a last good-night. He, as he stood on the porch looking back to her in the doorway, noticed that the light from the hallway behind her made a halo of her golden crown. "My queen is fast becoming a saint," he reflected sorrowfully.

The thought brought him back to her side. There must be one more good-night. He took her in his arms and gazed tenderly, searchingly, into her upturned face. He saw that her mind was busy with some serious thought. "Sally, sweetheart, of what are you thinking?" he asked.

"Of Romeo and Juliet," she answered. "I was

thinking of how fortunate they were, how much more fortunate than their hateful, quarrelsome families. Their families never really lived. But Romeo and Juliet — they loved and lived." She looked into the doctor's face, a wonderful smile broke in the dark depths of her eyes. "And I —" she said. "Do you know, dear, if I should die to-morrow, I would not care — so very much; for I too have loved, I have really lived."

. . . . . .

That happened in midsummer. The first snow of winter was on the ground when Sally died. There were those who said that the white flakes as they fell from heaven were not more pure than the sweet soul just ascended.

Shortly after Sally's death a touching tribute to her memory appeared in the "Pennsylvania Packet." It was rumored to have been written by "the pen of her afflicted lover." "But alas for the constancy of man!" says the record, "the same paper not so very long after gives notice of the marriage of Dr. Benjamin Rush to Miss Julia Stockton," and we are later informed that the doctor made a most devoted husband and an affectionate father.

Here the record ends. It does not tell us what were the doctor's thoughts as, many an evening, he looked westward to a little star dimly shining above the last rose flush of the dying day. Perhaps, could we know the thoughts the little star inspired, we would not believe that Sally was forgotten.

VIII.

A STRAIN FROM THE MISCHIANZA.

"WELL, ladies, what is the verdict? Is the Mischianza to be termed a success?"

It was John André who spoke, and the ladies he addressed were several of the ladies of the Blended Rose and Burning Mountain who, escorted by their knights, had retired from the dance awhile, to refresh themselves with sips of ice-tea and lemonade, and such other cooling drinks as were to be had, on pretty little garden tables, in the hall adjoining the ball-room.

A feminine chorus of "Oh's" and "Ah's," and more words equally appreciative greeted the Captain's question. The knights and other gentlemen who were in attendance on the ladies laughed at their pretty enthusiasms and one, not a knight either of the Blended Rose or Burning Mountain, but an undisguised British colonel resplendent in red coat, gold epaulets, and ribboned orders, Colonel Johnson of the twenty-eighth, he who was soon to marry the witty Miss Franks behind whose chair he was standing, remarked somewhat dryly with a humorous lift of the brows, "It appears that you ladies do not entertain the same opinion of the

Mischianza as does a certain acquaintance of mine, an old artillery officer at headquarters."

The ladies raised inquiring eyes to the Colonel, and John André asked smilingly, "Does the old gentleman disapprove?"

"So I should judge from his language," answered the Colonel. "I overheard a child ask him the difference between the Knights of the Mountain and the Rose, and the old officer replied, 'Why, child, the Knights of the Burning Mountain are tom-fools and the Knights of the Blended Rose are damn fools — I know of no other difference between them.'"

The men laughed at the story. But the ladies protested. That any one should use such language of their knights! It was shocking, shameful! They were loud in their praises of the heroes of the Blended Rose and Burning Mountain.

The heroes bowed low. The commendations of their ladies were very gratifying to them, they remarked. André, however, shook his head and regarded the assembled femininity with rallying glance.

"They are all for us now, gentlemen," he said, turning to the men. "But how will it be when the stern fortune of war calls us hence and our places in fair Philadelphia are taken perchance by the colonial troops?"

"Your places in fair Philadelphia may be taken, but not your places with us!" cried one loyal

maiden. "No, indeed!" echoed a second. And a third, fairer than the rest, of lily-like grace and dignity, and of a bright, vivacious smile, declared with a mock tenderness designed to tease, "We will keep our hearths burning for you always."

"Do, Miss Peggy," said André, leaning over the chair of the last speaker, whose favor he wore on his coat, and whose colors, white, pink, and red, like his own, declared her to be the lady in whose honor he appeared that evening as a knight of the Blended Rose. "And at the hearths that are to burn for us always," he continued, "will you not appoint certain objects to represent us — the poker, the tongs, and the shovel, for instance? I should feel surer of my place, I think, if I knew that something was serving as a perpetual reminder of me."

Miss Peggy smiled at the Captain's earnest trifling. "We have Dutch tiles at our house, you remember," she remarked, looking up with merry glance into his face. "You may choose Bible characters for your representatives if you prefer."

"Perhaps Bible characters would be more dignified," he rejoined, "would give us more prestige with you ladies." He turned to the men with charming enthusiasm. "Tarleton, you shall have Moses to represent you and De Lancey here shall have Adam, and I will have" —

"Balaam's ass?" sweetly inquired a voice from the vicinity of Colonel Johnson.

André laughed good-naturedly and answered without looking, "Miss Franks has said it. Balaam's ass shall represent me. I hope you will treat the poor animal kindly, Miss Peggy." He laughed again. His laugh was infectious and every one joined in it.

In the lull that followed the general merriment Major Tarleton, the most dashingly handsome of all the officers present, and whose costume, the orange and black that designated him a knight of the Burning Mountain, was deemed vastly becoming by the ladies, raised his glass high in air and addressed the men, "A health to the ladies of the Burning Mountain and Blended Rose, gentlemen," he cried.

The gentlemen responded gallantly. But when the health had been drunk, Miss Peggy remarked with a look of sly challenge for those who drank, "'T is to us that you drink now, but soon our healths will be forgotten and you will be drinking to the ladies of Baltimore, or of New York, or of Boston with the same heartiness with which you now drink to us."

"Never," came in chorus from the gentlemen, and Major Tarleton declared, "'T will be our Philadelphia friends, even when Philadelphia and all its charming citizenesses have been left far behind; eh, André?"

"Indeed, yes," echoed the Captain. "'Here 's to the ladies of the Rose and the Mountain,' as to-

night so again and again Major Tarleton will cry. 'With all my soul,' I will exclaim. 'Allons,' will respond Johnson, De Lancey, and the rest. The draft will seem nectar, and the libation made, we will talk upon the uncloying theme of the charms of the fair Philadelphians, and so beguile many a gloomy hour when we are far from you."

"What smooth tongues these gentlemen have!" commented Peggy in a loud whisper behind her fan to Miss Redman, the young woman who sat next her, and over her fan her eyes peered up laughingly into the faces of the English officers.

Miss Redman nodded, and she also retired behind her fan. "One would think to hear them talk," she responded, "that they had found Philadelphia pleasanter than any other city in the land."

The officers smiled down upon the whisperers, and André declared, with the earnestness and enthusiasm that made his merest nothings so delightful, "And so we have in very truth. What your witty Dr. Franklin said of our general may be said of all our officers. 'T is not so much that we have taken Philadelphia as that Philadelphia has taken us. Is not that so, gentlemen?" And he appealed to his companions in arms, who straightway added their protestations to his.

Meanwhile, in the ball-room adjoining, sets were forming for the quadrille, and several gentlemen in search of their partners were approaching the

merry group of which André and Miss Peggy were members. Presently Miss Franks went off from the group leaning on the arm of Sir William Howe, and Peggy followed with Lord Rawdon.

As the two couples entered the ball-room, Sir Henry Clinton was heard calling upon the grenadier band, that accompanied the dancers, to play "Britons, strike home!"

"Britons, go home, you mean," corrected Miss Franks, her dark eyes flashing fun as they passed Sir Henry.

A general laugh ensued. It was impossible to resist Miss Franks' wit. Even the subjects of it were captured by it.

Miss Peggy observed a smile on her partner's habitually frowning countenance, and with a sly look she inquired, "Does your lordship approve of such a rebel speech?"

His lordship, still smiling, shrugged his shoulders. "If a man had said that," he remarked, "he would have swung for it; but a woman says it and is applauded — a proof, Miss Chew, that while we are endeavoring to subjugate the men of this country we are being enslaved by the women."

Miss Peggy Chew laughed gayly in answer. The gallantry and homage which she was receiving that evening were very pleasing to her. She moved through the measures of the quadrille, the minuet, and the Sir Roger de Coverley, her head held high, her lips smiling, and her eyes dancing with

satisfaction and delight. She liked it well, that scene of extravagant frivolity, the lights, the music, the slow, graceful movement of the dances, the splendor of the crimson coats and brocaded gowns, the glitter of jewels, epaulets, and medals, the passing reflections in the mirrors, the scent of perfume, and the dust of powder shaken from queue and head-dress that were in the air. The color, the life, the fun of it all charmed her.

She entered with spirit into the small talk that was the order of the occasion. She discussed the latest cricket match with one officer, and with another she condoled upon the loss of his pet spaniel. She commented upon the apparent cruelty of Dr. Shippen in denying his daughters, Peggy's friends, the pleasure of taking part in the Mischianza; the girls, she asserted, were in a "dancing fury," and thought their papa had chosen an inopportune time and a most unpleasant way of showing his rebel sentiments. She wondered with the rest of the Mischianza world as to whether Lord Cathcart's flirtation with Miss Eliot would end in an engagement. She hoped so for Miss Eliot's sake, she declared, for the girl was in earnest and 't would be a pity if she should be obliged to learn that "tender looks are meant but to deceive."

Most of all Peggy talked about that of which she and all with whom she talked were a part — the Mischianza itself, the magnificent fête that was

honoring Sir William Howe who was so soon to resign his command and return to England. The regatta on the river that began the fête, its colors, its streamers, and its loud salutes was dwelt upon and praised. So, too, was the mock tournament between the Knights of the Rose and the Mountain that had followed the regatta. The decorations of the ball-room were admired, and the costumes of the knights and ladies.

"'T was all André's work," one after another remarked to Peggy. "We never could have done the thing but for André. There never was a more clever man than he with the pen, the pencil, and the brush."

And Peggy secretly rejoiced in the praises of her knight and was proud to think that she was the chosen lady of one who was so universally regarded as "the charm of the company."

With the rest of that throng of joyous men and women that the Mischianza had assembled, Peggy applauded the display of fireworks which, in the midst of the dancing, called them to windows, doors, and porches to learn in letters of light amid bursting balloons and rockets that the "Lauriers" of the departing general "Sont Immortels."

At midnight supper was announced. Folding doors, that had been "artfully concealed," parting, disclosed what was termed by the company "a magnificent saloon." Pier-glasses and branches of lights festooned with garlands of ribbon and

artificial flowers adorned the walls; lustres hung suspended from the ceiling; side-boards abundantly heaped with goodies stood in niches in the wall; tables promiscuously placed were lighted with numerous waxen tapers; negro slaves in turbans and oriental costumes with silver collars and bracelets stood about the tables in readiness to serve; and a hidden orchestra was heard playing, softly, romantic strains of music. About the whole there was an air of mystery and enchantment.

All through supper Peggy chatted vivaciously, merrily. From her place at the general's table, beside André, "the bright particular star" of the evening, surrounded on all sides by rank and fashion, wit and beauty, she distributed her smiles and glances with the grace that designated her a social queen. In that scene of brilliance and frivolity she was in her element, and the gay world about her was the gayer for her charming presence.

The supper hour wore to a close. At the last the healths of the King, the Queen, the Royal Family, the Army and the Navy, the General and the Admiral, the Knights and their Ladies were proclaimed by a herald and drunk by the assembled company. The hidden orchestra played "God Save the King," which was chorused by all present. Some of the guests returned to the ball-room. Others, of whom were Peggy and André, still lingered in the supper room.

Presently Montressor, the chief engineer of the

army and one of the four managers of the fête that evening, turned to André and said, "Our friend, Captain André, is, as usual, in excellent spirits this evening. We all know what a delightful song-bird he is. Will he not favor us on this present great occasion?"

The suggestion was greeted with applause, and André, smiling his thanks upon the company, rose and answered: "Yes, Captain Montressor, I am in excellent spirits this evening, as who could help but be on such an occasion and in such company. It will give me great pleasure to comply with your request. I will sing the old camp song, the soldiers' favorite and, if I mistake not, the ladies' favorite as well.

He sang:

"'Why, soldiers, why
Should we be melancholy, boys?
Why, soldiers, why,
Whose business 't is to die?
For should next campaign
Send us to Him who made us, boys,
We 're free from pain;
But should we remain,
A bottle and kind landlady
Makes all well again.

. . . . . .

"'Why, soldiers, why
Should we be melancholy, boys?
Why, soldiers, why,
Whose business 't is to die?
What sighing? Fie!
Drown fear, drink on, be jolly, boys,
'T is he, you, or I.'"

He sang the song with sweetness and pathos. As Peggy listened, the real meaning of the scarlet coats and gold epaulets about her, a meaning that she had quite forgotten all that evening, in the midst of the dancing, the feasting, and the general merry-making, was brought home to her. She thought of these men, whom she now saw apparently so care-free and debonair, on the battlefield, fighting, wounded, dying. She glanced up at André, his dark, handsome face lighted with a serious, almost a sad look, an accompaniment of his song, and the memory of a dream she had had only a short while before concerning him came over her with a vividness that frightened her. She experienced a sudden revulsion for the glitter and gorgeousness about her. The multitude of lights and mirrors, the draperies of flags and garlands of flowers, the elaborate costumes of the men and women, the smiling faces, the flow of laughter and of flippant talk became to her a mockery, a mask to veil the real grimness and hideousness of war.

She begged to be excused when partners came claiming her hand for the dances following supper. With André at her side she stepped out upon the vine-clad porch that led from the dance hall.

"You are tired," said André, looking with gentle solicitude into her face.

"A little," she answered.

"The garden will rest you," he declared. "Let us find a seat in some quiet corner."

They went slowly down the garden path between rows of box and hemlock. All about them lanterns dangled from the trees, giving the place a look of fairyland. Behind them was the house, a large stone mansion formerly the country seat of a quiet Quaker gentleman whose very shade must have blushed at the magnificence of the house that evening. It was one blaze of brilliancy, and from the open doors and windows dance strains floated down to them. Before them lay the river, dark and tranquil, flecked with numerous glimmerings of light from the galleys and flat boats that were at anchor there. It was a mild, pleasant night, that eighteenth of May of the year 1778. A gentle breeze was stirring the leaves, and the air of the garden was sweet with the blended fragrance of pine and apple-blossoms.

Peggy found the sweet air and the darkness refreshing. Her peace of mind returned and she ceased to think of the grimness and hideousness of war.

"How tall and straight the pine-trees are," she remarked softly.

"Like cathedral spires," said André; and she knew he must be thinking of his home.

They found the quiet corner and in its seclusion sat down upon a garden seat that stood there. They were silent for a while, enjoying the fairness of the night and of the scene about them.

Then Peggy observed, "I suppose you will write of all this to England?"

He nodded. "My pen will never do justice to the ladies and their gowns," he declared. "'T would take a god to describe them."

"Cupid?" she inquired, smiling.

André looked at her with answering smile. "A moment ago you were Penserosa. Now you are L'Allegro," he said.

"I never should have been Penserosa," she answered contritely, "for if ever there was a time made for the 'jest' and 'youthful jollity,' and 'the wreathed smiles' of which the poet sings, 't is to-night."

"Is it not splendid!" exclaimed André, with enthusiasm. "Do you know, Miss Peggy, it seems to me that to-night should be classed among those moments of which Rousseau has said, 'There are moments worth ages.'"

"Yes," said Peggy, "and let us hope life will hold many such moments for us." Then, after a pause, "How interesting life is," she declared, "and how mysterious when we try to look into the future!" A dreamy, far-away expression stole over her face as she spoke.

"You seem to be looking into the future now," declared André. "Tell me, what do you see?"

"'T is easy enough to see things for you, Captain André," she answered. "Look," with a wave of her hand as if to draw back a curtain from be-

fore fate's picture gallery. "There are military glory and the applause of your king and country, and a brigadiership, and, I do believe, a baronetcy as well." She turned to him with a merry laugh. "How do you like my fortune-telling?" she asked.

"You are a most delightful sibyl, Miss Peggy. I would that you had the ordering of my fate."

Peggy laughed again, and André asked her, "But what do you see for yourself? Pray look again into the future and tell me that."

Peggy shook her head. "Look for me," she said.

"I dare not," declared André. "I am afraid that I might see some officious, blue-jacketed colonel looming up in the distance."

"You need not be afraid," responded Peggy. "I am sure no blue-jacketed colonel would dare show his face when Captain André was around."

She avoided the Captain's eyes as she spoke. It was rather a dangerous game, that at which she and he were playing. One never knew when jesting might pass into seriousness.

Suddenly she became interested in the trees about her. "Oh, see!" she exclaimed. "What pretty blossoms!" and she pointed to the blossoms in an apple tree not far away.

Captain André, like the true knight-errant whose costume he had assumed that evening, immediately sprang forward to get them.

But Peggy protested. "Nay, do not try to reach them," she said, "they are too high."

André, however, regardless of silken hose and satin breeches, had already swung himself up among the branches, and as Peggy went and stood on the ground below, a shower of pink and white fragrance fell at her feet. And from above, André's voice came down to her, quoting reminiscently and as if to himself, a verse from a playful little epigram that he had composed upon seeing her one day among the branches of a tree in the garden of Cliveden, Peggy's home:

> "'But had the tree of knowledge bloomed,
> Its branches by such fruit perfumed
> As here enchants my view,
> What mortal Adam's taste could blame,
> Who would not die to eat the same,
> When gods might wish a Chew?'"

Peggy gathered up the blossoms that had fallen, and looking into the branches, declared in soft, laughing tones, "The fruit is on the ground this time, Captain André. You must come down if you wish a Chew."

"Coming," said André. In his descent he hung a moment upon a branch, that was quite high from the ground, before dropping. Peggy stood gazing up at him, the blossoms in her hands. Suddenly his attitude and his face as it shone white in the darkness, startled her, recalling more vividly, even,

than his song at supper had recalled, the dream that she had had concerning him. She gave a low, involuntary cry, and sank upon the garden seat, unconsciously letting the blossoms fall from her hands.

The next instant André was at her side. "Miss Peggy!" he exclaimed, in profound concern, looking into her face, and again, "Miss Peggy, are you ill?"

No, she was not ill, she protested, trying to laugh and not succeeding very well. Then something had frightened her, André queried anxiously; and when she did not reply, pray what had frightened her, he asked. Peggy avoided answering; Captain André need not be concerned for her, she said, — 't was nothing, only a little faint turn that had passed; indeed, she was ready to return to the ball-room now, was quite rested; would Captain André be so kind as to conduct her thither. André gazed at her wonderingly; he was her knight, he answered, and as such was hers to command in whatsoever way she pleased. However, neither he nor she made a move to go.

At length, after a long pause, Peggy remarked, "You are thinking me very silly, Captain André. I have a mind to tell you what frightened me."

She had regained her composure and spoke quietly, looking into André's eyes steadily, and with a suggestion of appeal in her glance. "'T was that I just now saw something which reminded me of a

dream I had recently concerning you. Your friends tell me you are a rash as well as a brave soldier. Perchance my dream may serve as a warning to you and cure you of your rashness."

She tried to speak lightly and playfully, yet she was conscious all the while that there was an undisguised seriousness in her tone. The truth was that, though not ordinarily a superstitious person, she had been thoroughly frightened by her dream. It was impossible for her to make a jest of it. She looked away from André, who was still gazing at her wonderingly and, it seemed to her, soothingly as well. She supposed he must observe something unnatural in her manner.

"You are thinking me very silly, Captain André," she said again.

"Nay," he answered gently, "I am thinking that you are tired and nervous. Tell me your dream, Miss Peggy, 't will lose whatever of horror it may possess for you when once it is told. Do not be afraid of frightening me. I have no fear of dreams," and he ended with a reassuring laugh.

Peggy was encouraged by his words and by his voice and manner as well. "I will tell you," she said. "But remember, the dream is to serve as a warning to you and is to cure you of your rashness."

Then, with her hands clasped loosely in her lap and her eyes gazing off through the vista of trees to the glimpse of river in the distance where, it

"YOU ARE THINKING ME VERY SILLY, CAPTAIN ANDRÉ."

seemed to her, the lights on the river shone like so many fallen stars, she told her dream.

"I dreamed," she said, "of a place which I have never seen in reality, a place surrounded by woods and hills, and near a river with cliffs on the further shore. I dreamed that it was autumn and the woods were red and gold and there was a haze on the hills. A great crowd was assembled in this place and into their midst came soldiers, soldiers in blue, bringing with them a prisoner in a scarlet coat. The prisoner's face I could not see. I dreamed that they hung the prisoner in the scarlet coat, while the waiting crowd stood round, silent and pitiful. When all was over and I looked up, I saw the face of the prisoner. Captain André, the face was yours."

For a moment after Peggy had finished, André did not speak. She began to wonder whether or not she had done right to tell her dream.

Presently she heard him say in his accustomed quiet voice and with a touch of playful irony, "'T is a strange fact, Miss Peggy, that you are not the only one who has dreamed of seeing me hung. Several of my friends have done the same for me. But I hope to disappoint their dreams and yours. I have no desire to die with the spy's halter about my neck. 'T is my wish to die in the press and storm of battle;" and under his breath he added, "In whatever way I die, I trust that it may be as a brave man."

"Do not talk of dying, Captain André," Peggy

interrupted hurriedly, and with a tremor of subdued emotion in her voice; "you make me repent that I did tell my dream."

"Ah, Miss Peggy, give not another thought to that dream. Who am I, or who is my dream self that we should disturb Miss Peggy's peace of mind!" André spoke with the note of playful irony still in his voice and with a sadness, too, that seemed to Peggy like the sadness of farewell.

She raised her head and gazed at him through the darkness, questioningly, searchingly, fearfully. Was the dream disturbing him as it had disturbed her, she wondered. Was it true, what had been hinted by men jealous of André's popularity and success in the army, that he had run the risk of dying the death of which she had dreamed as coming to him? Would he, perchance, run that same risk again? And did he feel the ignominy of such a risk, and was that the reason why, with his proud spirit, though loving all women, he would permit himself to love no one woman best?

"Captain André," she asked, in a low voice, "would you serve as a spy?"

"Yes, if I believed that to do so was my duty and would gain me distinction in the army," he answered, simply and honestly.

Peggy continued to gaze at him through the darkness. There was a suggestion of horror in her glance, for she was not without her share of the general opinion entertained towards spies, and there

was pity too, but most of all there was admiration. To what heights or to what depths would this man's devotion to duty as a soldier and his love of glory carry him, she wondered. She felt that, for the first time in her acquaintance with him, she knew him, and understood something of what his life, with its ardent ambitions and daring ventures, really was. The Mischianza and the ladies with whom he danced, and even the lady whose knight he was and whose favor he wore over his heart, were necessarily but trifling parts of that life, she determined.

With a quickly drawn breath she rose from the garden seat, and André rose with her.

She looked away. "What it is to be a man!" she said, with a thrill in her voice. "And I — I can only dance."

Then, with a sudden change from seriousness to lightness, glancing over her shoulder at him and smiling, she took the first position of the minuet, remarking with the æsthetic languor of an eighteenth-century belle, "Will you be so good as to conduct me back to the ball-room, Captain André?"

. . . . . .

History does not tell us what were the feelings of Peggy Chew on that second day of October of the year 1780 when her dream came true, and John André met his tragic death on the russet hillside near the village of Tappan. We may well believe that they were sorrowful.

That Peggy never ceased to speak of André with admiration we know, and we know too that the verses and songs which he wrote in celebration of her charms, and his account of the Mischianza which he dedicated to her, were treasured by her to her death, and on her death were bequeathed as precious legacies to her daughter.

Her daughter? Yes — for Peggy married. She married, too, a blue-jacketed colonel, "the hero of Cowpens," just such a blue-jacketed colonel, no doubt, as poor André had feared to see looming up in the distance of Peggy's future.

This blue-jacketed colonel husband of Peggy's was a patriot of the patriots. He never listened with very good grace, we are told, to Peggy's praises of André. He could not forget that André had been an enemy to the cause for which he himself had fought and suffered, and perhaps too he was a trifle jealous of the man who had once tenderly inscribed himself, "Miss Peggy's most devoted knight and servant."

At any rate, and whatever may have been the causes of his cherished hostility, it is a tradition among the descendants of Peggy and the Colonel that whenever these two were entertaining guests at their charming Baltimore home and Peggy would fall to talking of André and declare, "He was a most witty and cultivated gentleman," the Colonel would interrupt testily, "He was a damned spy, my friends, nothing but a damned spy."

IX.

IN THE AMBASSADOR'S GARDEN.

BREAKFAST was waiting. The pot of steaming chocolate was on the table, and the bread and butter, and the fruits from the garden. It was just such a simple repast as had often graced the breakfast table of the little farmhouse at Braintree, and to the Adamses, always democratic and unassuming in their tastes, it was as acceptable in their Grosvenor-square mansion as in that other less pretentious dwelling.

The women of the family, Mrs. Abigail and Miss Abby, were already in their places. They looked very fresh and tidy in their spandy morning caps and gowns. Only the seat at the head of the table was vacant.

"I wonder what can be keeping your father *now*," Mrs. Adams remarked. There was a note of weariness in her voice which implied that her question was not a new one.

"Oh, probably some 'petition,' or 'commission,' or 'private application,'" sighed Abby. "We must wait until they be served. An ambassador's family are ever the slaves of his profession."

Abby's air of stoic resignation was amusing.

Mrs. Adams looked at her and smiled. Through a long and rigorous course of training these women had learned to laugh at the little worries and vexations that assail the wife and daughter of a politician.

There were a few more moments of waiting. Mrs. Adams readjusted the top of the chocolate pot, and rearranged the cups and saucers. Abby, from her seat at the table, gazed out of the window at the bright October world without. There was a far-away look in her eyes. She was thinking, as she had often thought before, how much the centre of Grosvenor square, that open space opposite, its several acres of sunny greensward, its spreading trees, and its umbrageous walks, resembled Boston Common.

"Only not so nice," she reflected. Abby had a great deal of what her English acquaintances called provinciality, but what her American friends knew to be patriotism.

Presently the door opened and Mr. Adams entered, in his hand a packet tied and sealed. Straightway the breakfast was forgotten, and the women made a rush upon him with the glad cry, "Letters! Letters from home." They could forgive him fifty times over for being late to breakfast, if he brought letters with him.

Mr. Adams was a tease. He must needs cut the chord and undo the packet of letters very leisurely. "Here is one for you, my dear," he said, turning to Mrs. Adams, "and here, Miss Abby, are three,

four, upon my word, five for you, and more yet for your mamma. And where, pray, does the old gentleman come in? I see he will fare but slenderly. Only one for me."

Then began the unsealing and the reading. The chocolate grew cold. The bread and butter and the fruit went untasted. The ceremony of eating was quite forgotten. In those days of slow travelling and hazardous voyages, the arrival of letters from across the sea was an event to make trifles of the ordinary customs of life.

Abby read her letters in the order of preference, with a wise forethought that savored of her Puritan ancestry, reserving the best till the last. The first three were from certain young lady friends and cousins of hers left behind in her Braintree home. They contained many inquiries about her health and happiness, the latest European fashions, and her acquaintance with foreign life and foreign customs. When she returned, she was informed, she must be prepared to be regarded as a pattern in everything. Going abroad gave one such consequence. How did she like the English ladies? Did they compare favorably or unfavorably with the French demoiselles? Her Braintree friends were dying to hear the particulars of her presentation at court. What did she wear? How did she like their majesties, and the prince and princesses? In their fancy they could see her making her reverence to royalty. What of the fashionable courtesy?

They had heard it was low and slow. They supposed she had learned to make it with the perfection of grace and ease. Would she teach it to them when she returned? They imagined she would laugh most heartily at their little bobs and dodges. They were certain her brother, Master J. Q. A. (whom, by the way, they were delighted to welcome to his native shore), had laughed at them inwardly though he was outwardly so grave and kind. What a wonderful young man her brother was! — so wise, so talented, so accomplished, so altogether superior. They quite stood in awe of him. They had begged him to tell them when their dearest Abby would return. But the young man was non-commital. He had answered them with a sigh and a jest, hoping it would be before they were all married ladies. They sincerely hoped that it would, for their dearest Abby must know husbands were not to be had in Braintree; they wanted to see her once before they died. They assured her of their unchanging love and loyalty, and they signed themselves devotedly hers.

Abby finished the first three letters and laid them aside with a fond smile. "Dear girls!" she reflected, with that naïve Puritanism of spirit which was sometimes her charm and sometimes her fault, "they little realize how superior is their simplicity to the foreign airs and graces which they so long to imitate."

She pictured her young lady friends and cousins surveying her brother with looks of admiration and wonder, noting all the details of his costume from the length of his periwig to the size of his shoe buckles, and approaching him with the reverence due a young man who had travelled and lived in foreign lands, who had visited foreign courts, libraries, and picture galleries, and who had basked in the smiles of kings, queens, and emperors.

She saw her brother gentle and courteous in their midst, yet holding himself aloof with that proud consciousness of superiority which she knew must offend all those who recognized it. "I shall have to lecture John," she determined. "I feared his grand ways might make the girls feel ill at ease in his presence;" and she opened his letter with an elder sisterly severity of manner, but with an eagerness that showed she was a very proud and adoring elder sister.

She had a treat in her brother's letter. Like all the Adams' letters to one another, this particular letter from John Quincy to his sister was full of original comment, interesting detail, and loving remembrance. It told of his return to their beloved Massachusetts, whither he had gone expressly for the purpose of finishing his education in the college of his fathers. He did not regret, he said, the decision that had brought him home. He felt as he had always felt, that Harvard was the one college for him; that it was wrong for a man to receive

his education in any other place than the country where he was to live. His preferring to return home had surprised a number of his young acquaintances there, more than it would probably, did they know as much of Europe as he did. He had seen their dear brothers. Charles was coming on well in his studies and Tom was a good, industrious little fellow. Their aunt and uncle had done well by them. He had paid a Sunday visit to Braintree (immediately Abby was there with him in spirit) and had attended meeting twice. He would never have believed that the parson's voice, looks, and manners would have seemed so familiar to him. He thought while the man was preaching that he had listened to him every Sunday, without interruption, for years. As he looked round the meeting-house, every face above thirty he knew, but scarcely one under thirty — his own generation had certainly changed beyond recognition. In the afternoon he had been to take a look at their old home, the well-remembered farmhouse. As Abby reached this point in the letter, a wave of homesickness and longing went over her. When would she see the dear old place again, she wondered. Would they ever all of them be gathered together under its roof once more? Her brother's sensations on beholding it so deserted and forlorn were such that he could not stay ten minutes in its neighborhood. He was determined, he said, not to visit it again before the family's return. The letter

then took a more cheerful tone. Abby was informed of the fêtings, the tea-drinkings, the dinner parties, and the balls with which he was welcomed home. He wrote enthusiastically in praise of the scholars and politicians who entertained him, but upon his young countrywomen, the far-famed belles of New York and Boston, he passed pungent strictures. Oh, that the women of his land were as distinguished for the beauty of their minds as they were for the charms of their person! But, alas, too many of them were like a handsome apple insipid to the taste. They thought it beneath them to know anything but to dance and to talk scandal. Complete nonsense was a word not expressive enough of the insipidity and absurdity that governed their conversations. Here Abby must needs smile at her brother's severity. "He writes like a graybeard," she reflected laughingly. "I shall have to teach him to be more lenient to the foibles of his countrywomen." She was nearing the end of the letter which dwelt upon his thoughts of her and of their father and mother. "Compliments are an inadequate means of expression for those we love," he said, and he signed himself affectionately her brother, J. Q. A.

Abby laid her brother's letter aside with those already read. "John may be a trifle opinionated and austere like the rest of the family," she commented, "but he is a dear brother."

There still remained one letter unread, the best

one, which she had reserved for the last. Oddly enough, this was the only letter that did not come from America. One would suppose that so loyal an American as Miss Abby prided herself that she was would have preferred American news to foreign news. Abby colored at the thought. "Ah, but the letter was written by an American," she reflected. That excused her. She turned the letter over and glanced at her name and address and thought that they looked well written in such a large, bold hand. Would she read the letter now or wait until she was alone? She feared her mother's saucy tongue and her father's love of teasing. She slipped the letter in the waist of her gown and looked askance at her parents. She was half ashamed, half proud to have this secret from them.

Mrs. Adams had arrived at the last page of her last letter and Mr. Adams was reading with her over her shoulder.

"Mother," said Abby, with prim dignity, "may I be pardoned if I go now? I have much to do this morning."

Mrs. Adams looked up from her letter in some surprise. "Why, Abby, child," she remarked, "you have not had your breakfast yet;" and Mr. Adams gave his daughter a glance of keen scrutiny and inquired which of her letters had gone to her head.

Abby felt herself grow rosy. She wished she

had not been so precipitate; but she held up her head bravely and answered pertinently that it appeared she was not the only one who had forgotten breakfast that morning. Whereupon they all laughed.

Mr. Spruce, the butler, was summoned, the cold chocolate was removed, another pot of steaming chocolate was brought in, and breakfast proceeded in due form.

"Abby," called her mother, when at last the ceremony of eating was accomplished and Abby was returning to her room.

Abby paused on the threshold. Her heart sank. Was there to be another interruption? Would she never be allowed to go away and read her letter in peace?

"I shall want you to drive into Cheapside with me this morning to visit the shops," said her mother. "Will you be ready to start by eleven o'clock?"

"Yes, mother," answered Abby, meekly. Her heart rose again. She was glad that eleven o'clock was more than an hour away.

Abby's room was on the east side of the house and overlooked the garden. She found it flooded with the morning light and seeming like what she often called it, her sun-bower. There were flowers in the windows and in the vases on the mantelshelf, and the chintz with which the bed was hung and the chairs upholstered was of a pretty pink and white flower design. The windows were curtained

and several fine etchings hung on the wall, and over the mantel was a pastel portrait of John Quincy Adams at the age of sixteen. In the centre of the room stood a large table on which were books, writing materials, and a basket filled with needlework. The room was unmistakably that of a young girl, a young girl who loved sunshine, books, pictures, needlework, and flowers.

Abby seated herself in her favorite chair beside the window that looked out upon the garden, and proceeded to open her letter. Her eyes fell on the first word and immediately a light, quick and transforming, came into her face. Abby's habitual expression had always been rather prim, almost severe. It was as though the spirit of a long line of clerical forefathers looked out of those serious gray eyes. To be sure, the arched brows gave a certain piquant charm and the smile that lurked about the mouth showed a quaint humor that could be gentle, roguish, or satirical as occasion demanded. Yet the piquant arch of the brows and the faint smile were but parts of the habitual primness of expression. Abby was decidedly a New England girl, a daughter of the Puritans, and the stamp of her stern ancestry was in her face. Then, however, under the spell of that first magic word and those other magic words that came after, primness and severity vanished. A new and unusual sweetness was born in her face, the sweetness begotten of love.

"Sweetheart," she read, "I am coming back. I

had almost said home, for in my heart I call that home where you are. By the evening of the day this letter reaches you I shall be with you. Be a little glad to see me, I pray you. I shall be so very glad to see you. Thou little Puritan, how art thou? Art thou as stern as ever? Oh, Abby, I have not forgotten your many severities and sarcasms. They have become dear to me. Loving you as I do, I must love them as well. And, Abby, I warn you, I have grown brave since that last afternoon together in the garden. Gird on your armor of frowns and sharpen that formidable weapon your tongue. You will have need of them; for there is coming a soldier who is determined to fight for the possession of your heart as the knights of old fought *à l'outrance*, to the death, one who is always faithfully yours. W. S. S."

She read the letter twice, three times. Then with the new light in her face and the new happiness in her heart she sat dreaming, looking out of her window into a world that seemed to her new and very beautiful.

She had loved Colonel Smith, she told herself, almost from the time of their first meeting when, in the early spring of that same year, he had made his advent in the Adams' home, in the character of Mr. Adams' secretary. She remembered him the evening of his arrival, tall, dark, and of an erect, soldierly bearing, standing in the hall with her father as she came down the stairs.

Her father had presented him to her and the Colonel had bowed low over her hand, remarking that he understood he had usurped her office (Abby had been doing much of her father's writing for him) and hoping that she would not punish him as some usurpers had been punished. She had assured him that his head was safe so far as she had any power over it, and he had answered with another low bow, that now he had seen her, he realized that 't was his heart which was endangered. Abby, whose Puritan nature always resented flattery, had thought this a rather flippant and presumptuous remark. She had not smiled, but had looked gravely away. Afterwards, however, she had excused it, as she would excuse a fault in one she loved, by way of proof of her love.

And, as it had been with Abby and the Colonel at first, so it had been throughout their whole acquaintance. She was continually thinking him flippant and presumptuous, and disapproving of him and yet as continually excusing him. She could not have given herself better proof of her love for him.

Yes, she had loved him from the first, again she told herself. But he had never guessed. He had thought her cruel when she was in reality all kindness towards him. And now he was coming to take her heart by storm. He did not know that 't was his already. Abby smiled at the thought, a smile that was a reminiscence of the

quaint humor that had always been hers and a suggestion of the new sweetness as well.

From her seat at the window she looked down into the garden and thought of the last time he and she had been there together, the day before he left England on a mission for her father to the continent. It was October now. The leaves were beginning to fall, the vines were a red mantle on the garden wall, and the only flowers still blooming were marigolds and asters. But Abby did not see the garden as it was. She beheld it glowing in the glad June sunlight and exhaling a delicious summer warmth and fragrance. The roses and the honeysuckle were in bloom, the cherries were ripe, and butterflies went by in golden flashes.

She saw herself seated on a rustic bench in the shadow of a cherry-tree. Her garden hat and her garden gloves were thrown aside, and on the ground at her feet was a basket to receive the flowers which Colonel Smith was gathering.

The labor of gathering did not proceed as quickly as it might. The Colonel must needs make frequent pauses to rest against the wall and look at Abby.

Abby observed his dallying with apparent displeasure. "I thought you came into the garden to pick roses for me, Colonel Smith," she remarked, severity in her tone. "If you are so slow I shall be forced to dismiss you and do the picking myself."

The Colonel resumed his picking reluctantly,

and Abby gave grave directions: "Longer stems, if you please, Colonel Smith. There, that will do of the white roses. Now you may begin upon the red ones, if you are not too tired," — the last was uttered with mock compassion.

Colonel Smith smiled at her sarcasm, and sang as he tossed the roses into her lap and into the basket at her feet. His voice was strong and sweet, the strain was one of ardent melody, and the words were those of the passionate shepherd to his love.

Abby listened with downcast eyes. The song charmed her. Yet, when it was finished, she raised her eyes and remarked primly, "'T is a foolish song. None but a silly love would be tempted by 'ivory tables,' 'silver dishes,' 'a cap of flowers,' and 'a kyrtle of myrtle leaves.' A wise love would prefer ordinary wood and china, straw hats, and cambric gowns."

The Colonel knit his brows as though in desperation. "Oh, that eternal practicality!" he sighed. "It shatters all my air castles."

"They are best shattered," said Abby. "Air castles are generally unfit places for habitation."

She picked up her hat and gloves preparatory to departure. But the Colonel stopped her. He captured hat and gloves, and stood before her, an opposing presence. "Pray, do not go yet," he entreated. "I want to say good-by. Have you forgotten, Abby? I am going away to-morrow."

"I have not forgotten," she answered. She looked away, and when he hesitated to speak she raised her eyes to his in calm inquiry. "I am waiting for you to say good-by," she said coolly.

"How can I when you look so stern?"

"I cannot change my face, Colonel Smith."

"I would not have you," he exclaimed, with quick ardor, and then, after a pause, a despairing note in his voice, "You make a coward of me, Abby."

Abby looked surprised incredulity. "I would not have supposed that he who had once been aid-de-camp to General Washington could ever be a coward," she said.

"The English army was but a trifle to you."

Abby smiled at his wild exaggeration. But his tone pleased her. "Am I so formidable?" she asked. Her eyelids quivered, and her hands made a fluttering motion among the roses in her lap.

"Very," he answered, seating himself beside her. After a brief pause that was eloquent with meaning, he leaned forward and looked up into her face. "Those air castles that you so despise, did you never build any?" he inquired.

Abby nodded, smiling. "I am not always practical," she said.

"Is there a place for me in your air castles?" His voice came to her as though from a distance, low and pleading.

Abby longed to answer as her heart prompted,

but the dread that he might be jesting stopped her. "You have your own castles to inhabit," she declared.

"Ah, but I have made you queen in all my air castles," came the response. "I am bold. I would be king in yours."

Abby shook her head, hesitatingly. Her eyes were on the flowers in her lap. "Air castles are so easily blown over," she rejoined. "You had best choose a more substantial dwelling."

"Might I find a place in your heart?" he ventured. He was still bending forward, looking up with tender longing into her face.

Abby's eyes met his. She was on the point of yielding. But the old disapproval of what she deemed his flippancy and presumption asserted itself. She feared that his wooing, which had so charmed her, was not quite earnest and sincere.

"You are overbold," she said distantly, rising and gathering up her hat and gloves.

There had been no more words between them. She had gone on to the house and he had followed after, with the basket of roses. It had been a sad ending to a happy time.

That June day seemed long ago now. Abby did not like to think of the weeks that followed. They had been dreary weeks for her. She put all memory of them from her and lost herself in a bright dreamland of the future.

"Abby," presently her mother's voice called

from without the room. "'T is half after ten. I hope that you are dressing."

Abby woke to the present with a start and a little laugh for her own abstraction. She had quite forgotten Cheapside and the shops. And, as she recollected, she decided that the world of which they were a part was but a humdrum world compared with the new world which she had just discovered.

Paulette, the French maid, entering the room a few moments later, found her young mistress engaged at her toilet and smiling to herself as she dressed. Paulette assisted in the arranging and powdering of Miss Abby's hair, in the putting on of her pink muslin gown, its flounced underskirt of lutestring and its kerchief of white gauze, and in the donning of her black silk mantle and graceful leghorn hat.

Then, when the costume was complete, she stood off to admire, while Miss Abby surveyed herself critically in the long mirror.

"Ah, *mon Dieu*, 'tis provoking," remarked the little French woman with a long-drawn sigh.

Abby turned quickly from the mirror to her maid, expecting to hear that there was something wrong about her dress. "Why, what is the matter, Paulette?" she inquired. "What is provoking?"

Paulette shrugged her shoulders and dropped her eyes in subtle flattery. "Mademoiselle look so pretty, I so *mauvaise*," she explained.

Abby's brows knit in a slight frown expressive

of her dislike of idle compliment. "Nonsense, Paulette," she said. "I am not pretty."

She spoke without coquetry, sincerely, frankly. She knew she was not pretty. And yet she was not wholly displeased with the reflection that met her gaze in the long mirror. She did not see a beauty, but she saw a high-bred lady, whose costume represented mode, whose aristocratic air gave distinction, and whose quaint, interesting face possessed a charm beyond that of mere prettiness. To-day her eyes were shining and her cheeks glowing, and the smile would not leave her lips. It was the new glory that suffused her face.

Her mother was waiting for her in the coach. She rallied Abby for being so long at her toilet. "But you look very fine, my dear," she observed, with an approving smile.

Mrs. Adams, as usual, was in a merry, conversational mood. As she and Abby rolled along in their grand English coach, which was ever a source of amusement to them because of its grandeur (they had not been used to riding in a coach in their Braintree home), she kept up an animated flow of talk. She spoke of the shops and of what she was going to buy, of the objects of interest along the way, of the play of the night before, and most of all of the letters she had received that morning. She was very bright and entertaining. But Abby was unusually silent. She replied to her mother's remarks abstractedly and at random.

Down Piccadilly to the Strand they drove and along the Strand to Fleet street, from Fleet street over Ludgate Hill and through St. Paul's churchyard to Cheapside. They were a part of an unending train of coaches and of post-chaises, of market carts and huge West-country wagons, all bound for the heart of the great city.

They passed the homes of rank and fashion, long rows of stately mansions, the parks, the play-houses, and the coffee-houses. At length they came into the enchanted region of the shops.

Here was a world of wonders. Waxen ladies of ineffably sweet countenances and gentlemen of luxuriant mustachios smiled from the windows of drapers' shops and mercers' shops upon the passers-by, and by the magnificence of their costumes gave proof of the excellence of the linen goods and cotton goods, the silks and satins to be had within. In the wig-maker's windows life-like busts with shining glass eyes and brilliantly painted cheeks wore head-dresses of such surpassing loveliness that the whole wig-wearing populace must stop to admire and, if possible, to buy. In the boot-maker's windows rows of gentlemen's buckled shoes faced as many rows of ladies' high-heeled slippers, the shoes seeming to invite the slippers to tread a measure of the minuet with them, shoes and slippers together in their unrivalled beauty soliciting the patronage of all beholders. Little gilded Bacchuses perched upon bacchanalian barrels pro-

claimed the wine-seller's shops, and mysterious-looking bottles, red, green, and yellow, casting a lurid light, announced the chemist's shops. There was the iron-monger's shop, with his radiant fenders, andirons, and candlesticks; the cabinet-maker's, with his French polished mahogany and his chintz furniture; the tobacconist's with his twisted clay pipes, his pig-tail tobacco, and his elegant snuff-boxes; the green-grocer's, the butcher's, the baker's, the tailor's, the bookseller's, and the picture seller's, all variously interesting and alluring. Some of the shops were new and on a level with the street, were uniformly numbered, and boasted sash-windows; but there were others, older and less pretentious, which were below the level of the street and were approached by a downward flight of steps; their windows were many-paned, and, in place of a number, an old sign-board with painted symbol, creaking on its hinges, designated the shop as that of "The Golden Fleece" or "The Golden Key," or "The Bible and the Crown," or something equally incongruous and charming.

Abby's interest in the shops had always been very great. They had seemed to her, accustomed all her life to the primitive simplicity of a New England village, places of almost magic fascination. To-day, however, their attraction for her was something vague and shadowy. She saw them and was conscious of their many delights, but she

did not give much heed. She was preoccupied with her own sweet fancies.

And as of the shops so of the throng of shoppers, Abby was only partially observant. She bowed and smiled quite as usual to her acquaintances, English and American, whom she chanced to see, but if any of them stopped beside the coach to chat a moment she left the burden of talking to her mother. Now and then, however, when Mrs. Adams went into some shop without her and she was left alone in the coach and was accosted by some friendly spirit, she must needs collect her thoughts and converse quite as though to-day were any other day.

She found herself composing small-talk with a certain Mr. Randall, employed in the service of the American embassy, who was making his compliments to her at the coach window. A girl with a veil on went by, and Abby remarked upon the custom prevailing abroad of wearing gauze veils. Mr. Randall, with a meaning glance at Abby, observed that the blush of innocence was a better veil. Abby, true even in small-talk to her Puritan severity, smiled somewhat satirically and said she feared there were few veils of that sort worn in London and fewer still in Paris. Mr. Randall, who was aware of Abby's former residence in Paris and of her knowledge of the French language, inquired if they had any word in the French language expressive of innocence. Abby replied there was

only the one word "*innocence*," and that was almost without use there. Then she remarked with a sigh that she considered blushing a very unpleasant sensation. She thought it would be to one's advantage to be exempt from that attribute of innocence. Mr. Randall declared that he was not of her opinion.

Mrs. Adams returned to the coach. The shopping was over for that day, she announced. They were driving home. If Mr. Randall was going their way they would be very glad of his company. Mr. Randall *was* going their way. He got into the coach with them, and as it was discovered he had business with Mr. Adams, he was brought home to dinner with them.

"But," said Mrs. Adams, holding up a warning finger as they descended from the coach, "you must not bring business to the table. It interferes with digestion."

The dinner was a merry one. The day, according to the French calendar, was *le jour des rois*, and a pie baked in its honor had been prepared by the French cook. Mrs. Adams rose to explain its significance. "This pie, my friends," she said, "contains a bean, and whoever in the cutting is so lucky as to obtain the bean, that one is dubbed king or queen."

The pie was passed to Abby. She cut, but got no bean. Next, Mr. Randall took his turn, but the bean fell not to his lot. Mrs. Adams then

separated her slice, protesting that she had no cravings for royalty and was in no wise disappointed that the bean came not to her. Mr. Adams watched the division of the pie in silence, and when the remaining half was passed to him he took his knife and, with a few bold slashes, dissolved the poor paste to crumbs. From the ruins he picked out the bean and displayed it with a flourish. "And thus," he cried, "are kingdoms obtained."

All through dinner Abby joined in the general laughing and talking. Yet she was conscious all the while of a remoteness from the others. It was that same feeling of having entered a new world compared with which the world of dining, as the world of shopping, was but humdrum.

It was the same after dinner when she sat in the drawing-room entertaining callers. The social world, she decided, was even more humdrum than the worlds of dining and shopping.

The conversation that was going on about her seemed to her more than usually stupid. In one part of the room her mother was discussing politics with Dr. and Mrs. Jebb, English people who possessed a profound admiration for America. Abby heard them, wondering as usual at her mother's absorbing interest in politics. She had not inherited that interest. In another part of the room her father, with his hands locked behind him, stood surveying the new portrait of himself by Copley. He was not at all satisfied with it, he was inform-

ing the gentleman at his side, but 't was the best that had ever been taken of him. No artist had yet succeeded in catching his character. The ruling traits in his character were candor, probity, and decision, but no one would suppose so to judge from any of his portraits. Abby caught enough of what he was saying to wish that he would stop. She hated to have her father talk in that pompous fashion about himself. She realized that people criticised him for doing so, and she who knew what was best in him could not endure to have him criticised for what was worst.

"Yes," she said, in answer to the question which was being put to her by a certain Miss Bancroft, a somewhat supercilious young English-woman whose patronizing ways always aggravated Abby, "I like England very well."

"You ought to like it," declared Miss Bancroft with smiling condescension, "for 't is very evident that England likes you," and then, in almost the same breath, "Which do you like best, England or France?"

This was an interrogation to which Abby would never respond, though it had been asked of her every day since her arrival in England. She used to laugh in her sleeve at the very apparent jealousy existing between the two countries, observing that the English sought ever to imitate the French as the French to imitate the English.

She replied to the question now as always with a

degree of tact surprising in one of her candid character. "I really cannot give the preference to either," she said. "They are both charming countries."

Then, "Of course you prefer England to America," declared Miss Bancroft, more as though she were stating a fact than as though she were making an inquiry.

At this Abby forgot diplomacy. Her patriotism was roused. "I must confess that I do not," she said sturdily.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Miss Bancroft with a glance of incredulity from under arched eyebrows. "But certainly you must find a great difference between America and this country?"

"In what, pray?" inquired Abby, putting on her armor of primness and severity.

"Why, in the people, their manners, customs, behavior — in everything." Miss Bancroft ended with a nervous little laugh as though she were a trifle frightened by Abby's stern expression.

"Indeed, there is no great difference," retorted Abby. "We have, strange as it may seem, as much civility, culture, and refinement as the English; and our middle and lower classes are infinitely superior to yours."

Abby certainly had something of her father's courage. It quite routed her English adversary, who was glad to take refuge in talk of a less dangerous character.

Some one in the company reminded them of Sir

Charles Grandison, and they entered upon a lively discussion of Richardson's novel of that name. After they had praised the novel they praised the author. Richardson certainly had a perfect knowledge of the human heart, they decided, and Mrs. Siddons, they agreed, was not far behind him in that knowledge. They had both been to the play the night before to see the celebrated actress in "Othello." She was "inimitable," "incomparable." Their rhapsodies over her (even so severe a critic as Abby could rhapsodize over Mrs. Siddons) only ended with Miss Bancroft's departure.

Abby drew a long sigh of relief as the door closed upon the last caller. She glanced at the tall clock in the hall. It was already six. In two hours, or a very little more, Colonel Smith would be there. Her spirits rose with the thought. A sudden gayety, quite foreign to her nature, possessed her.

At the tea table her father observed that she was unusually merry. "What makes you so happy, Miss Abby?" he inquired playfully.

Abby did not know, she said. She thought it might be the letter she had received that morning from her brother. Her eyes dropped to her tea-cup and the color deepened in her cheeks. She had never been so artful never.

Her mother and father glanced at her suspiciously and then exchanged looks of amused understanding. It was just possible that Abby's artfulness had betrayed her.

That evening, after tea, they were all assembled in the drawing-room. Mr. Adams, seated in his easy chair on one side of the table, was reading Plato's Laws; Mrs. Adams in her easy chair on the other side was industriously writing letters; and Abby on a low hassock at her mother's feet was busy with her needlework. She was wearing the pink muslin gown of the morning, with a gauze cap and apron to match the gauze kerchief. As she bent over her work the new sweetness was very visible in her face.

The door opened and Colonel Smith appeared on the threshold. There was a general expression of surprise at his arrival — and yet no one was really surprised, certainly not Abby.

Mr. and Mrs. Adams were warmly cordial in their welcome. But, with the exception of one quick smile of recognition, Abby took no part in the greeting. She was silent during the discussion of politics and public affairs that went on between her parents and Colonel Smith. And when her father began to talk private matters with the Colonel, she stole out upon the balcony that overlooked the garden.

The night was mild, almost like one in June. The soft air cooled her hot cheeks and the light of the stars calmed her. She could not have stayed in the room a moment longer, she told herself. She had feared, every time that she felt the Colonel's gaze resting upon her, that her face would betray her

secret. And she did not wish to betray her secret, not yet, not there in the room with the others.

She rested her hand upon the balcony's rail and looked off into the night. She saw not only the quiet glitter of the stars. She saw the restless glitter of the torchlit city and the shapes of mighty buildings towering dark and dim against the sky. And she heard a confusion of sounds, shouting and calling, and the rumbling of coaches and of heavy wagons, sounds that fell upon her listening ear as one loud, insistent voice, the voice of a great city.

Then she looked down into the garden lying so restful, so peaceful, so sweet in the heart of that great city, and she thought thus the soul may build a garden for itself apart from the glare and noise of the world, a garden where rest and peace and sweetness may be found. Her first peep had told her that the garden of love was very beautiful. She would not hesitate to enter there.

In the room behind her they had come again to politics and were discussing the proposed bill which was to provide for free ports in the West Indies. By the sound of the Colonel's voice, Abby could tell that he had turned toward the door, through which she had come to the balcony.

At length she heard her mother say with a laughing note in her voice, "Do not let us keep you, Colonel Smith, if you are impatient to pay your respects — to the stars;" and then his answer with a deep echo of the laughing note, "Well, to tell

"YOU FIND ME A HARD CONQUEST, SIR KNIGHT."

you the truth, Mrs. Adams, I am rather impatient to pay my respects — to the stars."

It appeared that this was the opportunity for which he had been waiting. A moment later he was standing on the balcony beside her. She had not turned at his coming and he said with bold pleading in his tone, "Have you no word of welcome for me, Abby?"

She let the hand that he had bent to kiss rest a moment in his clasp. "You are welcome, Colonel Smith," she said quietly, primly.

"How sweet that one brief sentence sounds, spoken in your voice!" he declared. "I would travel further than I have to hear it."

She began to question him about his journey, but he interrupted. He would have no dallying. "Did you get my letter?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Were you angry at it?"

"No."

"Or at me?"

"No."

Her hand had dropped from his clasp, and lay hidden in the soft folds of her gown, and her face was still in shadow. But the quick rising and falling of her bosom stirred the white kerchief at her throat into an unusual tremor. Colonel Smith would see in a moment, he would guess her secret. Already he was looking at her with a longing that was almost understanding.

"These brief monosyllables," he asked, "what do they mean, and the new note in your voice?"

She turned quickly from the shadow to the brightness from the open door. The poise of her head was proud, but her face was all aglow with the new glory.

"Abby! sweetheart!" was all that he could stammer in the first transport of his happiness.

She looked up at him, a tall, dark soldier standing so far above her, bronzed by his seven years of service in her country's war. A faint smile was on her lips and the love-light shining in her eyes, as she said, with a touch of the old sarcasm, "You find me a hard conquest, Sir Knight."

. . . . . .

Abby never had cause to regret her choice of knight. To the end Captain Smith remained to her a knight like Bayard of old, without fear and without reproach, devoted and true. Abby's life as his lady was a happy life. To be sure, her house in New York was quite like other New York houses; she went to dinner parties, receptions, and balls like other New York ladies; and like them had her housekeeping and her children to engage her attentions. Extrinsically her life was as prosaic as her name, Mrs. Smith. But intrinsically her life was a poem. The garden that her soul had builded for itself apart from the glare and noise of the world never ceased to bloom for her. Abby walked among its flowers, and in sunshine and in shadow she found it fair.